

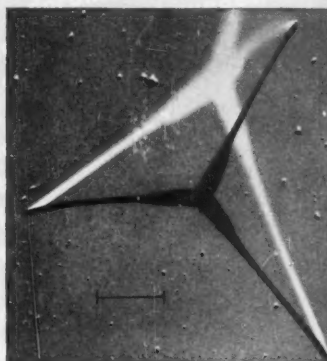
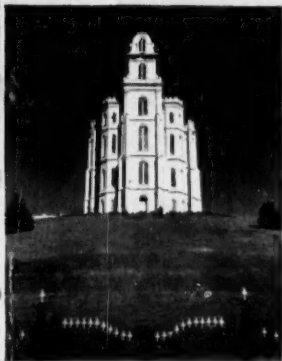
# American PHOTOGRAPHY

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## *Review*

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That's a tough question. Seems that everybody has his own idea of just what salon quality is. But if it calls for a paper that can translate the subtle nuances of tone and gradation—give you print performance far beyond expectations—then that paper is Cykora.

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### **HOME STUDY Short cut to success!**

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## Close-Ups

**T**HE CREDIT LINES under the pic-  
tures in this issue indicate only  
in part those to whom it is necessary  
to extend our thanks for help in as-  
sembling the material for this special  
issue. The Museum of Modern Art and  
the Metropolitan Museum furnished  
prints from their collections of early  
work, and Beaumont Newhall, curator  
at the George Eastman House, was the  
source of much generous help in ad-  
dition to furnishing a Strand print  
from his private collection.

The Eastman Kodak Company fur-  
nished several of the prints used in  
our science picture display and the  
makers of all the prints on these pages  
were very gracious in giving consent  
to their use. The Photographic Divi-  
sion, United States Navy, furnished  
a number of prints and went to some  
trouble in making our deadline.

Especial thanks should go to Walter  
Rosenblum, who gave nearly a day of  
his time helping to go through the  
files of prints at the Photo League,  
and to the Photo League itself for  
making prints available.

We should also thank "Pop" Jordan  
and Sam Grierson for consenting  
to have their columns omitted from  
this issue so that there would be room  
for more special material. Even at  
that, a number of features had to be  
omitted, some of them to appear in  
issues later this year.

Our cover spans the half-century,  
with four prints from the beginning of  
the period across the top. The makers  
(in the usual left-to-right order) are:  
Alfred Stieglitz, Gertrude Käsebier,  
Edward Weston and Clarence White.  
In the strip below we reproduce prints  
which show four widely-separated con-  
temporary approaches to the problems  
of photography: Ansel Adams, Morris  
Engel, George Platt Lynes and an elec-  
tron microscope photograph of a  
49,000-times magnification.

To all our writers and photogra-  
phers we extend our sincere thanks  
for helping to make this an outstand-  
ing issue of AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHY.  
We hope it will be an indication of  
the pattern of the magazine during  
the coming half-century.

**A gilt-edged investment  
that will pay  
many dividends!**

## KAROMAT 36

Precision 35mm Camera  
of Enduring Satisfaction!



Aside from its permanent value in  
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36 will yield rich pictorial divi-  
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- Synchro Flashgun
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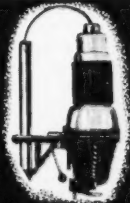
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- with f3.5 Coated Schneider Radionar Lens



with f3.5 Coated Schneider Radionar

**39<sup>95</sup>** postpaid **32<sup>50</sup>**

Latest 1950 Model!

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- with Built-in FLASH SYNCHRONIZATION
- f2 Coated Lens
- Coupled Rangefinder



Shp. wt. 4 lbs.

**114<sup>00</sup>** used

### Used 35mm CAMERAS

BOLSEY R2, f2.2 cnd., cpd. R.F., built-in flash	49.50
DOLLINA, f2.9, coupled R.F.	49.50
KARDON, f2.2 cnd., cpd. R.F.	129.50
KODAK 25, f4.5 Anastigmat	34.50
KODAK 25, f2.5 cnd., cpd. R.F., built-in flash	29.95
KODAK BANTAM, f4.5 Anastigmat	34.50
KODAK BANTAM, f2.5 cnd., R.F.	49.50
KODAK EXTRA, f2.5 cnd., R.F.	34.50
KODAK FLASH BANTAM, f4.5 cnd.	34.50
KODAK RETINA, f2.5 Anastigmat	29.95
KODAK RETINA, 1c, chrome, f2.5	49.50
KODAK RETINA II, f2, cpd. R.F.	49.50
KODAK RETINETTE, f4.5 Anastigmat	34.50
MINOX II, 1950 Lightweight Model, f3.5 cnd., speeds to 1/1000 sec.	75.00
STEREO REALIST, f2.5 coated	124.95
SUPER BALDINA, f2.9, cpd. R.F.	47.50
SUPER BALDINA, f2.8 Tessor, R.F.	34.50
VOIGTLANDER VITO, f2.5 coated	34.50
WELTI, f2.9 Tessar	34.50
WELTI, f2.8 Tessar, cpd. R.F.	49.50
ZEISS TENAX I, f2.5, rapid sequence	39.50
ZEISS TENAX II, f2.8 Tessar, R.F.	79.00
ZEISS IKONTA 25, f2.5 cnd., R.F.	44.50
ZEISS IKONTA 25, f2.8 cnd., Compur Rapid Synchro Shutter	74.50
ZEISS CONQUEST, f2.8 cnd. Tessar, coupled R.F., bit-in meter	149.50

Average Shipping Weight 4 lbs.

### Used CONTAX & LEICA Cameras

CONTAX I, coupled rangefinder with f2.5 Zeiss Tessar	49.50
CONTAX II, coupled rangefinder with f2.8 Zeiss Tessar	89.50
CONTAX III, coupled rangefinder with f2 Zeiss Sonnar	149.50
CONTAX III, cpd. R.F., bit-in meter with f2 Zeiss Sonnar	169.50
LEICA I, f2.5 Zeiss Sonnar	209.00
LEICA C, f2.5 Elmar, cpd. R.F.	119.50
LEICA D, f2.5 Elmar, cpd. R.F.	129.50
LEICA IIIC, f2 Summitar	179.50

Average Shipping Weight 5 lbs.

### Used ROLL FILM CAMERAS

AGFA BILLY, 2 1/2x3 1/4, f4.5, Compur	34.50
AGFA ISOLETTE, 2 1/2x3 1/4, f4.5, Built-in flash	29.50
BALDARITTE, 1 1/2x2 1/4, f2.9 Triumph	47.50
DOLLY V.P., 1 1/2x1 1/4, f2.5 Anastigmat	14.95
POTH DEBRY, 1 1/2x1 1/4, f2.5	27.50
KODAK DUO 420, 1 1/2x2 1/4, f2.5	29.50
KODAK MEDALIST, 2 1/2x3 1/4, f2.5 cnd. Elmar, coupled R.F.	99.50
KODAK MEDALIST II, 2 1/2x3 1/4, f2.5 cnd. Elmar, cpd. R.F., bit-in flash	169.50
KODAK MONITOR 420, 2 1/2x3 1/4, f4.5, Flash Supermatic Shutter	49.50
KODAK TOURIST 420, 2 1/2x3 1/4, f4.5 cnd., built-in flash	49.50
KODAK VIGILANT 420, Kodak	14.50
SUPER SPORT DOLLY, 2 1/2x2 1/4, f2.9	29.50
VOIGT. BESSA 64, 2 1/2x3 1/4, f2.5	39.50
VOIGT. BESSA, 2 1/2x3 1/4, f2.5 Shopper	39.50
VOIGTLANDER BESSA, 2 1/2x3 1/4, f2.5 Shopper, coupled rangefinder	49.50
ZEISS IKONTA A, 1 1/2x2 1/4, f2.5	47.50
ZEISS IKONTA B, 2 1/2x2 1/4, f4.5	35.50
ZEISS IKONTA C, 2 1/2x2 1/4, f2.5	42.50
ZEISS SUPER IKONTA B, 2 1/2x3 1/4, f2.8 Tessar, cpd. R.F.	119.00
ZEISS SUPER IKONTA BX, 2 1/2x3 1/4, f2.8 Tessar, cpd. R.F., bit-in meter, bit-in flash	154.00
ZEISS SUPER IKONTA C, 2 1/2x3 1/4, f4.5 Tessar, cpd. R.F.	49.50

Average Shipping Weight 5 lbs.

### Used PRESS CAMERAS

2 1/2x3 1/4 BUSCH PRESS, f4.5 Elmar	49.50
2 1/2x3 1/4 CENTURY GRAPHIC, f4.5 cnd., synchronized flash shutter	74.50
2 1/2x3 1/4 Pacemaker, C.O.W. GRAPHIC, f2.7 Elmar, Kalart, R.F.	149.50
2 1/2x3 1/4 Pacemaker SPEED GRAPHIC, cnd. f4.5 Elmar, Flash Supermatic Shutter, flash gun	189.50
2 1/2x3 1/4 Anniversary SPEED GRAPHIC, f4.7 cnd. Optar, Kalart, R.F., flash gun	134.50
2 1/2x3 1/4 SPEED GRAPHIC, f4.5 Zeiss Tessar, Compur Shutter	49.50
4x5 BUSCH PRESSMAN, f4.5 Zeiss Tessar, Compur Shutter	49.50
4x5 Pacemaker SPEED GRAPHIC, f4.7, Kalart R.F., selenium, gun	189.50
4x5 SPEED GRAPHIC, f4.5, Kalart rangefinder, synchronizer	139.50

Average Shipping Weight 12 lbs.

### Used TWIN LENS REFLEX

AMICO REFLEX, f2.5 cnd., synchro flash shutter	129.50
ARGOFLEX, f4.5 Anastigmat	29.95
ARGOFLEX EF, f4.5 cnd. Anastigmat	39.95
CIRCOFLEX, f2.5, Rapax Shutter	59.50
CIRCOFLEX, f2.5 cnd., Alpha Flash Synchro Shutter	69.50
KODAK REFLEX, f2.5 coated	49.50
ROLLEICORD, f2.5 Zeiss Lens	79.50
AUTO ROLLEIFLEX, f2.5	139.50
ZEISS IKOFLEX I, f2.5 Zeiss	59.50
ZEISS IKOFLEX II, f2.5 Tessar	94.50
ZEISS IKOFLEX III, f2.8 Tessar	149.50

Average Shipping Weight 6 lbs.

### SINGLE LENS REFLEX

EXAKTA B, 1 1/2x2 1/4, f2.8 Tessar	49.50
KINE EXAKTA, 35mm, f2.8 Tessar	99.50
KINE EXAKTA, 35mm, f3.1 coated Zeiss Biotar, NEW	169.50
KOELLER I, 2 1/2x3 1/4, f2.8 Anastigmat	54.50
NATI, GRAPLEX, 2 1/2x3 1/4, f2.5 B&L	44.50
PRAKTIFLEX II, 35mm, f2.9 Victor	39.50
PRAKTIFLEX II, 35mm, f2.1 coated Zeiss Biotar, Comp. Hexar	99.50

Average Shipping Weight 7 lbs.

### Used 8mm CAMERAS

B&H FILMO COMPANION, f2.5	47.50
B&H MAGNINE-8, cnd. f1.9	109.50
B&H AUTO-8, turret, cnd. f1.9	144.50
BOLEX H-8, 1 1/2" f1.9, 3-lens turret, frame counter	169.50
CINE KODAK 8-25, f2.7	34.50
CINE KODAK MAGAZINE 8, f1.9	99.50
CINE KODAK MAGAZINE 8, f2.7 coated	34.50
DEJUR CITATION, f1.9, roll-finder	57.50
DEJUR MAGAZINE, f2.5 cnd.	69.50
KEYSTONE K36, f2.3 cnd.	37.50
KEYSTONE K3, f1.9 Wollensak	49.50
KEYSTONE OLYMPIC, f1.9 cnd. lens	37.50
KEYSTONE MAG. K40, f1.9 cnd.	44.50
REVERE 88, f2.8 lens	27.50
REVERE RANGER, f2.5 cnd.	59.50
REVERE MAGAZINE, f1.9 cnd.	59.50
REVERE 99, turret, f2.8 and 1 1/2" f2.5 focusing telephoto lens	89.95

Average Shipping Weight 4 lbs.

### Used 8mm PROJECTORS

AMPRO A8, 750 Watts	89.50
B&H FILMOMASTER, 400 Watts	99.50
B&H PICTUREMASTER, 750 W. turret	174.50
B&H REGENT, 500 Watts	109.50
DEJUR, 750 W. still and reverse	89.50
DEJUR, 1000W	109.50
KEYSTONE K37, 300 Watts	49.50
KEYSTONE K-38, 500 Watts	69.50
KEYSTONE K-48, 750 Watts	69.50
KEYSTONE K-108, 750 W.	79.50
REVERE 99 Deluxe w. turret	87.50

Average Shipping Weight 25 lbs.

### Used 16mm CAMERAS

B&H AUTOLOAD, Magazine, f2.5	99.50
B&H AUTOLOAD, Magazine, f1.9	119.50
BELL & HOWELL FILMO 75, f2.5	39.50
B&H FILMO 76, f2.5 T.M.C.	49.50
B&H FILMO 70, f2.5 T. M. Cooke	119.50
BOLEX H-16, built-in frame counter, cnd. 1" f1.9, cnd. 3" f2.5, cnd. 17mm f2.7—all lenses NEW	295.00
CINE KODAK 8, f2.5	37.50
CINE KODAK K, f2.5	29.50
CINE KODAK K, f1.9 focusing lens	189.50
CINE KODAK K, f1.9 focusing lens	79.00
CINE KODAK MAGAZINE-16, f1.9	109.50
KEYSTONE A7 (7 speed), f1.9	62.50
KEYSTONE A-12, turret, f2.5 cnd.	69.50
KEYSTONE K-50, Mag. f2.5 cnd.	79.50
KEYSTONE A-12, turret, f1.9 cnd.	89.50
KEYSTONE K-50, Mag. f1.9 cnd.	29.50
REVERE 16, Magazine, cnd. f2.5	49.50
REVERE 16, Mag. turret, cnd. f1.9	99.50
REVERE 16, Mag. turret, cnd. f1.9	119.50
REVERE 16, Magazine, cnd. f1.9 fac.	109.50

Average Shipping Weight 18 lbs.

### Used 16mm PROJECTORS

AMPRO IMPERIAL, 750 Watts	129.50
BELL & HOWELL 87, 400 Watts	57.50
B&H DIPLOMAT, 750 W.	139.50
B&H SHOWMASTER, 750 W.	189.50
BOLEX G8-16, 750 W. for 8 & 16mm	199.50
KEYSTONE A-72, 300 Watts	47.50
KEYSTONE A-74, 300 Watts	34.50
KEYSTONE K-140, 750 Watts	74.50
KODASCOPE 16-10, 750 Watts	79.50
KODASCOPE 16-20, 750 Watts	89.50
REVERE 48, 750 Watts	89.50

Average Shipping Weight 35 lbs.

### Used SOUND PROJECTORS

AMPRO CENTURY 5, 750 Watts	195.00
BELL & HOWELL 128, Sound-Silent	129.50
BELL & HOWELL 179, Sound-Silent	325.00
DEVRY BANTAM, Sound-Silent	229.50
KODASCOPE 1840, Sound-Silent	189.50
NATCO 3015, Sound-Silent	179.50
NATCO 3020, Lightweight, 2" f1.6	179.50
ROYAL HITE, Lightest of them all	99.50
REVERE, Lightweight, 750 Watts	179.50
VICTOR 28, Sound-Silent	129.50
VICTOR 40, Sound-Silent	149.50
VICTOR 60C, Sound-Silent	295.00

Average Shipping Weight 60 lbs.

### Used ENLARGERS

AUTOFACING 82, up to 2 1/2x3 1/4	119.50
DEJUR PROFESSIONAL 4x5, f4.5	34.50
DEJUR VERSATILE II, takes up to 2 1/2x3 1/4, condenser, 3 1/2" f4.5 lens	69.50
DEJUR VERSATILE I, takes up to 2 1/2x3 1/4, condenser, 3 1/2" f4.5 lens	87.50
ELWOOD STUDIO 5-2, 5x7, 100 W.	57.50
ELWOOD SP-2, 5x7, 200 Watts	64.50
FEDERAL 121, 2 1/2x3 1/4, f6.3 lens	14.50
FEDERAL 269, 2 1/2x3 1/4, f6.3 lens	24.50
FEDERAL 470, 4x5, f6.3, condenser	84.50
KODAK HOBBYIST, Cold Lite, f6.3	24.50
KODAK PRECISION, 2 1/2x3 1/4, condenser	79.50
OMEGA 9, up to 2 1/2x3 1/4, condenser	49.50
OMEGA B4, up to 2 1/2x3 1/4, with cnd. 3 1/2" f4.5 lens and condenser	89.50

Average Shipping Weight 60 lbs.

### Used EXPOSURE METERS

CHRONOS	19.95
DE JURE DUAL PROFESSIONAL	15.95
GENERAL ELECTRIC DW-58	14.95
GENERAL ELECTRIC DW-48	16.95
GENERAL ELECTRIC PR-1	19.95
HORWOOD DIRECTOR	29.50
WESTON CADET	14.95
WESTON MASTER 11	19.95

Average Shipping Weight 3 lbs.

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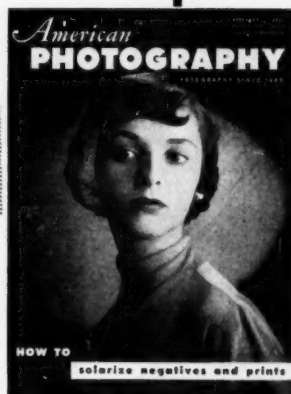
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George B. Wright



## photography in mid-century

*We* can open this review of 50 years of photographic work with no more appropriate portrait than that of Alfred Stieglitz, whose creative lifetime almost coincides with the period we are considering. A leader (often a dictator), he created the Photo-Secession movement which opened our century and set new and higher standards for work. His genius developed rapidly beyond this, and in the pages of *Camera Work* and in his own photography, he challenged all photographers to continuously develop their use of the camera.

His gallery exhibited modern painting long before the famous Armory Show, which "officially" introduced it to an astonished America. He took the lead in exhibiting all the art-forms and dem-

onstrated the integration of photography with other media.

Stieglitz grew with, and usually ahead of, modern photography. His influence through his own product and through the guidance he gave other workers directly was a major force in developing contemporary work.

In many ways, photography has changed little since its beginnings. A time-traveler could step from a talk with Stieglitz in 1901 into a contemporary darkroom and accustom himself to our materials and equipment with little effort. It is not the tools but the rôle of photography in our society which has changed over the half-century.

This is not the occasion to examine our culture in detail, but the contrast is striking between the world today and the world which the pages of *Camera Work* or *Wilson's Photographic Magazine* or the *American Amateur Photographer* (later to be renamed *AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHY*) revealed in the opening years of the century. The rate at which our society increases in complexity is constantly accelerating, and the older photographer could learn our films and processes long before he would comprehend the roots of our style and the social complex within which we work.

Photography is woven into this complex in basic ways. Most persons, perhaps, think of photography in terms of snapshots. The invention of roll film and the daylight loading spool antedate the beginning of the century by a few years, but the flood tide of their popularity has come up with the turn of the century. There are few homes in America today without some sort of camera and few homes in the Western world where the name "Kodak" would not be recognized.

Even those homes without cameras almost invariably contain family photographs, for a charac-





teristic of the democratization of society since the 18th century has been the development of means to record the individual features of the less privileged, when once only the powerful and the wealthy could afford a painting to give immortality to their appearance.

Less apparent than the ubiquitous Brownie are the cameras of science and industry. No manufacturer today could eliminate photography from his processes and survive. A surprisingly large fraction of the total output of film and supplies is used in the factory: to record tests, in control processes, in record keeping and directly in production. In some industries the use of photographic templates—full-sized blue-prints photographed on the metal which is to be fabricated—has changed production methods since the last war.

Behind industry, basic science is enquiring into the structure of the universe, using as some of its tools emulsions the average photographer has never heard of. Our modern telescopes have become giant cameras, patiently gathering light too faint for the eye to see. It was just 100 years ago that the first daguerreotype was exposed through a telescope at Harvard University, and now film has eliminated human vision from astronomical work. Only a few years ago, photographs of light from the stars (made during an eclipse) demonstrated that light was bent as it passed through the sun's gravitational field and provided experimental support for Einstein's theory of relativity.

At the other extreme of the dimensions with which scientists work are the emulsions designed to aid the researchers exploring the atom. Nuclear fission and those emissions which behave like neither wave nor particle, but like something for which our language has no word, are recorded for study by means of the developable tracks they make in a variety of new emulsions.

Physics, chemistry, biology, physiology, medicine—there is no field of human inquiry which does not rely on photography as a major tool.

If he remains unaware of the rôle of the camera behind the scenes of society, the citizen cannot remain unaffected by the use of photography in communication. Successful half-tone engraving be-

gan in the 90's, and many magazines were already carrying illustrations by that time, but the impact of visual journalism is a phenomenon of the last generation.

Advertisers were quick to pick up the techniques of brilliance and sharp detail learned in the first world war, which were serviceable for merchandising as the earlier phase of soft focus and intentionally lost detail, popular with those who were trying to make the camera produce paintings, could never have been. The contemporary pattern of advertising came into being almost by spontaneous eruption during the 20's, as many brilliant workers followed the lead of Edward Steichen, whose pictures for Condé-Nast set the new standards of accomplishment. Today, we could fill the rest of this page listing those whose photographs influence every dollar we spend.

Less directly, but perhaps more importantly, our opinions and beliefs are constantly reinforced or modified by the editorial use of pictures in public communication. Visual journalism influences the way we spend our vote quite as much as it does the way we spend our dollar. *Life* is, of course, the obvious example. Brilliantly edited, it enters millions of homes to exhibit each week the world as seen by its editors and publisher.

Almost every publication, however, uses pictures in some form to tell current history. The picture editor has become as important as the copy editor, and the two must work closely together in the production of modern publications. Again, almost overnight, reputations have been made in this new field and the capabilities of the camera extended beyond the limits of the previous year.

What must not be lost sight of is the social responsibility of its use. A photograph is not "objective" since its maker is not. The camera is indifferent to its subject, the photographer can never be indifferent. Every photograph is an expression of opinion. Photographs in public prints are as carefully chosen as are the words that accompany them and are as effective in presenting a point of view. The photographer has as much responsibility to society as has the writer, and his work must reflect this responsibility.

*It is unprecedented that such a "mechanical" thing as photography—regarded so contemptuously in the creative sense—should have acquired in barely a century of evolution the power to become one of the primary visual forces in our life. Formerly the painter impressed his vision on his age; today it is the photographer.*  
—Laszlo Moholy-Nagy



A STUDIO AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

## *the arts forecast a coming revolution*

*t*he early years of the century, like those immediately preceding, were outwardly quiet years, yet they concealed within the shell of a "horse-and-buggy" society the revolutions which were soon to create the modern world.

Undoubtedly, the arts pointed toward the future. In Europe, the Academy still reigned, but the "wild-men" ran their own exhibits, called themselves Secessionists, began to paint not the world of surface appearance but their impressions and reaction to what they saw. For a long time photography was to lag behind this tremendous creative development of the painters. The photographer wanted dreadfully to be accepted as an artist. To the vision of most photographers, the way to do this was to produce the best possible imitation of conventional painting.

The same opinion still exists in some quarters today. A comparatively recent presentation of the pictorialist approach includes the remarkable statement:

And I can only say that anyone who thinks for a moment that our photographers can rival our painters in artistic skill and insight is totally lacking in that sensitiveness and appreciation without which no one can hope to understand great art . . . the painter gives us a true record of impression, and his falsehood is more convincing than the camera's truth.

The pictorialist humbles himself before the easel because the painter can alter his picture of the world in ways impossible to the camera. Earlier, photographers had been less ambitious to be painters and, as a direct result, their work has a vigor

which appeals to us; we recognize the work of Hill and of Sarony, of Jackson and of Sullivan, as art, while the work of such groups as the Photo Pictorialists of Buffalo now resembles copies of impressionist paintings made with color-blind film, losing the peculiar virtues of both media.

The work of Garo, a Boston professional, is a case in point. To modern eyes many of his portraits are clean, revealing, full of life. His pictorial work done with his friends who made up the Boston Photo Clan now have little to say to us. His "Art" does not impress us; his use of the camera in a natural way was art.

At least one critic was astute enough to recognize these issues during the process and not with the assistance of hindsight. The fabulous Sadakichi Hartmann, who was called the "first art critic who realised the possibility of photography being developed into a fine art," said in 1904:

*As the etching needle is the great expressive instrument for sketchy line work, so legitimate photographic methods are the great expressive instrument for a straightforward depiction of the pictorial beauties of life and nature, and to abandon its superiorities in order to aim at the technical qualities of other arts is unwise, because the loss is surely greater than the gain . . .*

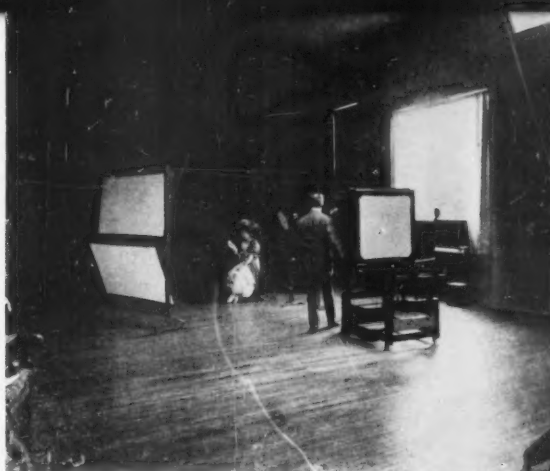
*"And what do I call straight photography," they may ask, "can you define it?" [sic] Well, that's easy enough. Rely on your camera, on your eye, on your good taste and your knowledge of composition, consider every fluctuation of color, light and shade, study lines and values and space division, patiently wait until the scene or object of your pictured vision reveals itself in its supremest moment of beauty, in short compose the picture which you intend to take so well that the negative will be absolutely perfect and in need of no or but slight manipulation. . . .*

*I want pictorial photography to be recognized as a fine art. It is an ideal that I cherish as much as any of them, and I have fought it for years, but I am equally convinced that it can only be accomplished by straight photography.*

This is an ideal which has been since realized, but it has taken the labors of many workers and the pressures of a world in turmoil to accomplish it.

The 20th century opened on a wave of optimism. Progress was king. America had acquired an empire. Theodore Roosevelt was the popular hero and later that year was to bar photographers from the White House grounds as nuisances in public life. For a picture of this beginning year of our century when the Photo-Secession was about to burst upon the world, when many, later to be famous, were developing their first films, when the modern world was almost ready to be born, turn across the page for Beaumont Newhall's account of photography in 1901.

# photography fifty years ago



A STUDIO AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

**P**hotographically, the twentieth century opened on the crest of a wave. Amateur photography was universal. Professionals, after a lean decade, rejoiced. "Never has there been a year of greater prosperity than the year 1900," wrote Edward L. Wilson, the dean of American photographic editors. The *American Annual of Photography* listed more than 100 camera clubs, and throughout the world 150 periodicals devoted to photography alone appeared to satisfy the demands of millions.

These quarterlies and monthlies and weeklies contain clues to the state of photography 50 years ago. The first impression, on leafing through a score of them, is that photographers have not changed. They asked the same questions that we ask, wrote about the same things, took almost the same pictures and sought as earnestly as we

for the magic key that would win them success easily, quickly and infallibly.

Technically, photography was basically the same then as now. Daguerreotypes, calotypes, ambrotypes, collodion plates both wet and dry, were forgotten. They were dug out of oblivion for an historical exhibit at the Paris World's Fair of 1900, but were soon forgotten again. An 1850 cameraman would find today's processing methods bewildering, but a 1900 amateur would feel at home in your darkroom. The past 50 years have been decades of perfection rather than of innovation.

The gelatin dry plate was firmly established. In 20 short years it had replaced the older processes completely, except in the special field of photo-engraving. Its simplicity, flexibility and ease of manipulation at-

tracted thousands to photography who lacked the courage to make their own negative material. No longer was it needful to clean a glass plate, flow it with just enough collodion to cover its surface, plunge it into the caustic silver nitrate bath, expose it while wet and develop it on the spot. Now photography could be done almost by rote. A box of ready-made glass plates or a roll of film, a simple hand camera, and you were ready to photograph almost anything. You simply pressed a button and then, at your leisure, developed the negatives in your darkroom. Or you had it done for you. It was deceptively simple; for the first time the taking and processing operations were divided. If you failed, it

---

**beaumont newhall**, F.R.P.S., is now the curator of George Eastman House, Inc., in Rochester and was formerly curator of photography at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Before founding that department, he was an assistant at the Metropolitan Museum. He is widely known as a lecturer and writer on photographic subjects and is the author of *A History of Photography*, recently published. During the war, he earned eight battle stars as a major with the Army Air Force in Egypt, North Africa and Italy.





G. B. Shaw FREDERICK H. EVANS  
(Photograms of the Year, 1901)

was too late to repeat the exposure. You did not, like the wet plate man, wash off the collodion and start anew, resensitizing the same piece of glass and returning it to the camera which still stood upon its tripod.

But the dry plate brought more than simplification and division of labor. It brought speed and the word "instantaneous." Photographers were just learning to take life in action. It was still a wonder that the form of a leaping horse could be recorded in full detail, and photographs of smoke rings and the muzzle blasts of ordnance amazed the layman. The camera not only held, but controlled time. The new cinematograph was more than a recording instrument.

When the Star Theatre at Broadway and 13th Street in New York was being pulled down in 1900, the American Mutoscope and Biograph Co. set up a moving picture camera in an adjoining building and took one exposure every four minutes of every working day for four weeks. "In the finished positive," we read in *Wilson's Photographic Magazine*, "one views at first the old Star Theatre, standing, as it had for many years, looking down with serenity upon the bustle of Broadway traffic. Then, as if struck by a tornado of supernatural strength, the building begins to crumble. Chimneys

totter, walls cave in, and whole stories vanish, until, at last, the site shows only a cellar excavation, and the Broadway cars, with the sidewalk procession, continue as if nothing unusual had happened. A still more novel effect is obtained by projecting this film in reverse, and thereby building up in two minutes the structure which the constructors were a month in razing."

The speed of an automobile was judged by taking two exposures on the same plate as the vehicle whizzed by. Knowing the interval between exposures, it was possible by measuring the distances between homologous parts of the two images to calculate with nicety the speed—which proved to be nine miles an hour.

"The new photography"—x-ray—was still a novelty, and radiographs of animals and of the mutilated hand of an artillery man were published as news. The sensitivity of photographic emulsions to radioactive materials was just being noted. Nor were the evil effects overlooked. Becquerel, the pioneer atomic scientist, carried "a few decigrammes of radiferous radium-chloride inside a sealed tube in his waistcoat pocket for six hours. The sore did not heal for a month. This will add one more to the cheerful list of skin diseases that civilization enables us to classify, develop, and diagnose."

Organic developers were replacing the older pyro and iron solutions. The stock lists of 1900 included metol, hydroquinone, amidol, pyrocatechin, glycin and a host of other agents known

now only in research laboratories. A formula was published for a five-second developer. Despite the brilliant discovery by Hurter and Driffield of the mathematical relationship between exposure and development, negatives were almost universally processed by inspection in a tray, under (or, with glass trays, over) a safelight, which some progressive amateurs were fitting with electric bulbs. The magazines were full of advice: if the image "comes up" quickly, dash a few drops of 10 percent potassium bromide solution into the developer; if the image is tardy in making its appearance, put the plate in plain water and relax. Through trial and error photographers learned how to judge the contrast of an unfixed glass plate or film sheet. It is a skill which we have lost in these days of highly sensitive emulsions which can only be exposed to the dimmest of safelights for a few seconds. We are less concerned than were our predecessors with bringing the negative to a particular degree of contrast, for—within limits—we can choose a paper to fit the negative. But in 1900 the photographer had to make the negative suit the printing process. If he couldn't do it in the developing, he had to resort to the after-treatment which generally was called "doctoring the negative."

Ammonium persulphate had just been introduced as a reducing agent by the Lumière brothers; they found that in a two or three percent solution this chemical has the remarkable property of attacking the denser portions

Salon, 1901

(Photograms of the Year, 1901)





of the silver deposit first, thus reducing excessive contrasts. Before and after prints were reproduced in the manuals. Our old friend that is seen in every salon, Manhattan from the Brooklyn Bridge, was shown in a print made from a hopelessly contrasty negative: the wires were eaten through by over exposure of the sky. After doctoring the negative in the Lumière reducer, the print shows the spider web sharply. Ammonium persulphate has fallen into disuse because of its instability. If it is stale, it works unevenly, and woe to the photographer who plunges into it a poorly washed negative still bearing traces of hypo! But with care, it will still work wonders with negatives so hard that even the softest paper gives "soot and white-wash" prints.

iron, and the "development" consisted in replacing them with platinum salts. The paper was not ordinarily coated with an emulsion but retained its texture, pleasing the esthetic sensibilities of the pictorialist. It gave a delicate graduation of middle tints, and the permanence of the image satisfied the archivist.

Gum was the most controversial printing technique. The photographer sensitized the paper himself, but it was easy: gum arabic, potassium bichromate and a pigment. On exposure to light the gum changed its solubility. That which was shielded from the light by the density of the negative was washed away in cold water. Any area could be eliminated by spraying it with hot water. A rough drawing paper coated with gum mixed with red pigment gave the photograph, so the pictorialists declared, the quality of a sanguine drawing and elevated the print beyond the mechanicalness of the older papers.

The carbon process, like the gum process, relied upon the property of potassium bichromate to change the solubility of gelatin. It gave prints of great richness, and the color of the pigment could be altered at will. It was, however, difficult to work because the image was not visible until the complicated processing was done. A greatly simplified technique, which amounted to the transformation of the silver image of a bromide print to a bichromated pigment, was invented by Thomas Manly in 1900. He named it ozotype; it is now known as carbo.

Bromide paper and the so-called "gaslight" papers, which were exposed briefly to brilliant artificial light, and developed in dim artificial light, were looked upon askance by professional and amateur alike. The paper came in only two degrees of contrast, hard and soft, and was by no means uniform in quality. An article was published showing, by comparative illustrations, that P.O.P. still gave the best copy for halftone reproductions. One professional declared that he had doubled his business by switching to bromide paper, for he was no longer dependent on the weather, and could get his orders out more quickly than his competitors.

The view cameras of 1900 would delight any photographer today. They were made in great variety and were equipped with all the swings and tilts that ingenuity could contrive. To their designs we have contributed nothing in



F. Holland Day ROBERT DEMACHY  
(Photograms of the Year, 1901)

all these 50 years. Hand cameras were still a novelty. The Panoram Kodak camera was the newest thing in the roll film line. Advertisements for the "Twin Lens Artist Camera" of the London Stereoscopic Co. duplicate the arguments advanced by today's manufacturers of similar cameras, stressing the portability, ease of focusing, brilliance of the ground-glass image and the rapidity with which successive exposures could be made. One model took 12 3 1/4 x 4 1/4-inch plates, or 24 cut films in a magazine; another model used roll film. In France there was a host of precision-made miniature cameras called "jumelles," literally "twins," hence "binoculars." In the early days of the dry plate, cameras were made imitating opera glasses: one lens was for taking, the other for finding. By 1900 the jumelle no longer was an imitation or disguise. The two lenses were both used for taking stereoscopic pairs, and a direct vision viewfinder was mounted on top of the metal

#### le Stéréoscope

(Annuaire Général, 1901)



(Annuaire Général et International de la Photographie, 1901)

Too little contrast was corrected by intensification, usually with mercuric chloride, although Agfa had just introduced a proprietary product which was well spoken of.

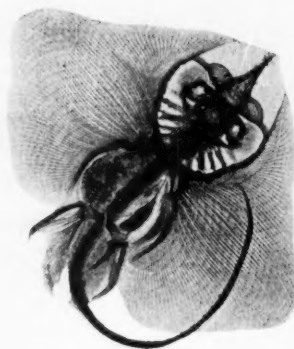
There was a wide choice in the way to make prints. The old salted paper and albumin prints were on their way out, but instructions were still printed. These papers were sensitized by the photographer himself. It was much easier to use prepared P.O.P.—printing out paper—of the type which still lingers as the familiar "proof" paper. These gelatino-chloride and collodio-chloride papers turned dark beneath the negative in the sun. After exposure they were toned with gold chloride, fixed and washed. Usually the surface was brought to a high gloss between heated steel rollers. P.O.P. required a high contrast negative so harsh that to print a 1900 negative on today's short scale papers is often an impossibility.

The noblest printing material was platatype. The sensitive salts were

box. Enlargements from half the stereo negatives were published to show that it was no longer necessary to carry the great bulk of a view camera in order to have big prints.

Anastigmat lenses were universally adopted by 1900. In that year Voigtländer introduced a portrait lens in five focal lengths, from  $3\frac{1}{4}$  to  $11\frac{1}{2}$  inches, with the unusually large relative aperture of  $f/2.3$ , many times faster than anything available before. The remarkable power of telephoto lenses was the subject of many articles. Ernest Marriage, in his *Elementary Telephotography* (1901), summed up the characteristics of true telephoto lenses: "They give photographs of objects on a larger scale than ordinary lenses will, with the same camera extension. They are not of fixed focal length, and will give a sharp image at any camera extension." He showed how valuable these lenses were by reproducing close-ups of inaccessible architectural details and of wild animals, candid shots of people taken without their knowledge from distant vantage points and portraits free from foreshortening. Today the telephoto lens is so little known that the term is often incorrectly used to refer to any lens of long focal length.

Two great figures in the world of photography—Josiah Johnson Hawes of Boston and Henry Peach Robinson of England—died in 1901. The most that the editor of *Photo Era* could say of Hawes was that at the age of 93, he was the oldest living photographer in the United States. No one recognized that Hawes was one of the world's finest photographers and that the daguerreotypes which he made with Al-



X-Ray, 1901

bert Sands Southworth would be the prized possessions of museums 50 years later. The esthetic appreciation of the qualities of the straightforward, full scale photographic image was yet to come. Eugene Atget was working unheralded in Paris. Not a picture of his was reproduced, not a word about him printed, in one of the 150 photographic magazines which appeared in 1900.

The *British Journal of Photography* spoke of Henry Peach Robinson, in its obituary, as "the uncrowned king of photography." But if, during the years 1858 to 1901, he never wore a crown, he nevertheless was heaped with honors. His writings went into edition after edition and were widely translated; his annual photographs were yearly looked forward to, not only by photographers, but by the public, and were reproduced by wood engraving in the *Illustrated London News*. Robinson was the virtual founder of pictorial photography. His influence be-

came less great at the end of the century, when his theories were challenged by P. H. Emerson. His death was called the snapping "of the last link between the old order of things."

The new order was the subject of lively controversy. Alfred Stieglitz, who played a pioneer role in the launching of pictorial photography in the United States, defined its aims in *Scribner's* for November 1899. He divided photographers into three classes—"the ignorant, the purely technical and the artistic." He showed that, to the artist-photographer, the print was the highest expression. He pointed out that no two prints from the same negative were identical, and he praised the gum and platinum processes as "the two great printing media of the day." Stieglitz furthered exhibitions, campaigned for juries made up of artists, published for the Camera Club in New York the handsome quarterly *Camera Notes* and by his example showed what could be done with a camera beyond records. Edward Steichen, at that time, was just beginning his long and distinguished career. On club rosters and exhibition catalogs, the names Clarence White, Gertrude Käsebier, Alvin Langdon Coburn, F. Holland Day, Frank Eugene began to appear. Their photographs were characterized by soft focus, a "symphony of tones" in the middle of the gray scale with sparing use of white or black, simplicity of composition reminiscent of Whistler and the Japanese with principal figures often bisected by the edge of the picture, bold cropping of the print into rectangles of narrow proportion and the use of sub-mounts of colored card.

Printing-Out Paper and Gum Bichromate Prints

(American Annual of Photography, 1901)

H. Wenzel, Jr.



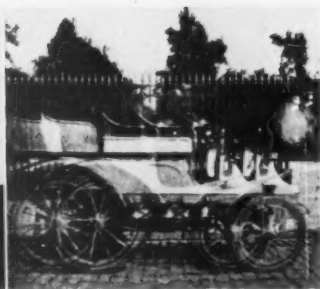
"The new American school" was attacked and championed with a liveliness unknown to today's critics. In 1900 international recognition was won at a show held at the Royal Photographic Society in London and at the Photo-Club in Paris. And in 1901 the American contributions were the sensation of the two big London exhibitions, the Salon and the Royal Photographic Society's exhibition. Photographs of these shows were reproduced in *Photograms of the Year*, showing the pictures just as they were hung, all jammed together on the walls. Each photograph was individually framed and mounted—the dead monotony of uniform 16x20 inch mounts was still to come.

Stieglitz and J. T. Keiley, the editors of *Camera Notes*, printed the finest reproductions of pictorial photographs from Europe as well as America and reproduced, as well, criticism pro and con from other magazines, so that for the pictorial world at least, the record appears in one place. They even reprinted from the *Photo American* two satirical attacks against the management of *Camera Notes*, signed A. Smiler. Everybody recognized the prototypes of the characters Litstig and Keely in the skits, but nobody knew who was hiding under the pseudonym. The authorship of the "Smiler Etudes" was widely discussed. When it was suggested that the editors of *Camera Notes* had themselves planted the Etudes as a publicity stunt, Stieglitz inserted a handsome advertisement in the quarterly offering a reward for the solution of the puzzle.

The pictorialism of 1900 still exists in two forms. The creative spirit which led Stieglitz and his associates to claim artistic validity for photographs made with esthetic intent has found its outlet in a way strikingly different from the work which startled the world 50 years ago. Stieglitz, Steichen and later Strand, Weston and Adams, turned to an appreciation of those qualities which are photography's own and which are beyond the powers of the artist in any other media. Thanks to the fight which was already under way in 1900, art museums are now less prejudiced; some have even championed photography. On the other hand, pictorial photographs are still being made which, alas, no more than imitate the outer form of pictures made full 50 years ago. Soft focus, rough papers, texture screens, tampering with the delicate lens-drawn image



(American Annual, 1901)



(Photo-Gazette, 1901)

#### Arrested Movement

are all resorted to in an effort to make photographs which will stand comparison, not with photographs, but with paintings. One could duplicate every photograph in a 1900 annual with pictures from today's salons.

The greatest technical advance has been, of course, in color. There was no technique simple enough to win universal acceptance until the Lumière brothers introduced Autochrome plates in 1908. The Lippman interference process gave brilliant results, but it was impractical. The plates, viewed properly, were jewels, but there was no way to use them. The Joly technique made use of a screen finely di-

vided with transparent ink in red, blue and green lines. The negative was taken through the screen. Positives from them were viewed through identical screens placed in contact. Four-color letterpress printing was at a high level; reproductions published in the periodicals of 1900 bear comparison with work done today.

Our prophet spoke in the pages of the *British Journal of Photography*. [In 1950] he said, "pictorial photography will be dead, photography in color will be universal, lenses will be out of date, the amateurs will all be schoolboys, and all cameras will be 'made in Japan.'"

One of the most influential groups during the early years of the century was the Buffalo Pictorialists, less than a score of devoted photography fans who exhibited as a group and whose work became a strong influence in founding the "pictorialist" tradition. A book of their work, from which this illustration is taken (using the original engraving), was published a quarter-century ago by American Photography. A great many of their pictures would be acceptable to present-day salons.





GERTRUDE KAESEBIER

(Courtesy Mrs. Hermine Turner)

1900-1910



EDWARD WESTON

(Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art)

ALFRED STIEGLITZ







GERTRUDE KAESEBIER

(Courtesy Mrs. Hermine Turner)



CLARENCE WHITE

(Courtesy Museum of Modern Art)

(Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art)

CLARENCE WHITE



EDWARD STEICHEN

(Courtesy Museum of Modern Art)





EDWARD STEICHEN

(Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art)

*yesterday*

*today*

RUDOLPH BURCKHARDT

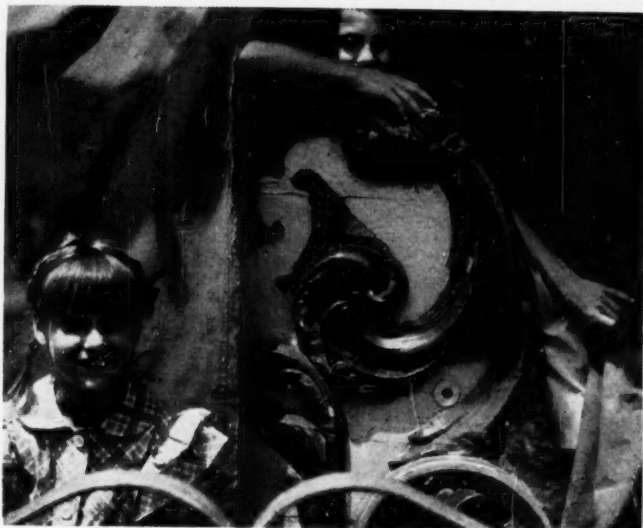




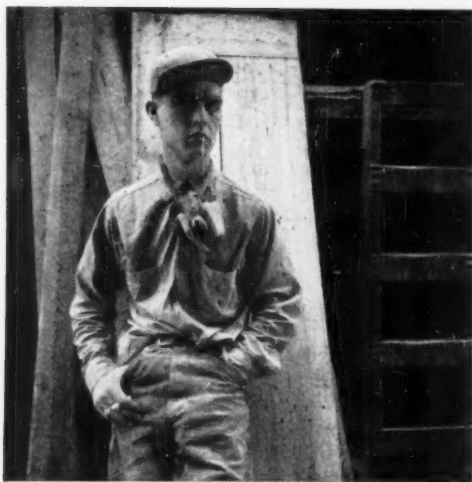
LEON HECHT

*mid-century*

ALLEN DOWNS



JEROME LIEBLING







LEE DRUCKER



MORRIS ENGEL

JOHN SZARKOWSKI



DODY





ALFRED STIEGLITZ

## *photography develops a social point-of-view*

*A*fter the furor of the Photo-Secession, the photo magazines of the next two decades, read today, are for the most part dull reading. Not that nothing was being done, for contemporary photography was being formed and those workers now recognized as masters were discovering themselves and working out their methods and approach.

But the publications intended for photographers reveal little of it. The salon movement was in its heyday and the prints reproduced were the ones which were gracing the walls of the pictorialist salons from London to New York to Tokyo. The acknowledged king of pictorialism was Frank Roy Fraprie, editor of *AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHY* and of the *AMERICAN ANNUAL OF PHOTOGRAPHY* until 1949. He was of the same generation as Stieglitz, but he led in another direction, reigning over the amateur and providing a magazine to give him guidance and advice. He was a prolific exhibitor himself, and he took over the task of compiling and publishing the annual list of those exhibiting in the salons. Almost single-handed he established their conditions of entry by barring from the list those salons which did not comply.

In the temper of the times, this was a serious weapon. The object of salon entry was to make

a high score; there was no purpose in the exhibitor sending to a salon which would not be counted in his record.

The period of Mr. Fraprie's editorship nearly coincided with the period of greatest vitality of the salon movement. The salons continue, but the younger generation is seeking different forms of expression and leadership in a different direction.

There have been a number of circumstances to change the climate in which we work. The principle one, perhaps, was the great depression when the bottom fell out of the postwar boom and the relations between man and his society were necessarily reexamined. This stimulated the growth of the documentary approach which Arthur Siegel recounts in the following pages.

The original purpose was not to evolve an art form. The series of picture reports from these workers was intended to examine a problem and to present it for public discussion. But these pictures were not mere records. They were alive in a manner which immediately made pictorialism for its own sake seem a product of a romantic and long-vanished world.

As with any movement, it can be used creatively or as a cliché. No technique or approach can be greater than the man who uses it. Some workers use it in such a manner that an art-form emerges; others have used it only as an expression of their private dissatisfactions with their immediate corner of the world.

The first of the present series of wars, the Spanish Civil War, again changed the climate of photography. Photographic journalism had been born long before, at least as far back as the Crimean war, but it took on a new dimension under the strain of modern battle conditions. Again, the intention was not to create "art" but to record both the surface effects and the deeper implications of a world which had thrust its people into an abnormality which was to become hideously "normal" for years. Yet the camera, honestly used, expanded our knowledge of photography as an art-form.

In the contemporary world it is dangerous to have a point-of-view. We are in a period of social

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instability; conflicts between groups, once hidden and slow-acting, are now in the open and tend to be violent. Every time he snaps his shutter the photographer indicates to what group he belongs. Whatever opinion he professes he will find enemies.

There is as yet no adequate history of what is loosely termed the "documentary" approach, written in terms of the conditions under which it developed and how it influenced its environment. The brief survey which we print on the following pages is probably the most complete to see print so far.

# fifty years of documentary



LEWIS W. HINE

*In* photography, documentary is the term used to describe a specific attitude which sees, in the creative production and use of photographs, a language for giving a fuller understanding of man as a social animal.

By examining closely, by isolating and relating his subjects, the documentary photographer penetrates the surface appearances and reveals the world about us. The documentary editor, either by working directly with the photographer or by assembling previously unrelated pictures, combines the photographic image with text to create meaning in some area of the social scene. In either case, the endeavor to influence human behavior by giving a deeper understanding of the social process is the same.

As we look through the major documentary works of the past 50 years,

we find that each one, in order to fulfill this aim, has approached the problem through the analysis of a specific time period, a specific place or a specific aspect of human life. We find works which have concentrated on a period in time: a day, a year, a decade. Other works have concerned themselves mainly with the place: a dwelling, a street, a state, a nation.

The final and largest group, which places the emphasis on a particular segment of the social process, ranges from a study done in terms of one man's daily routine to the complex picture of a nation gripped by economic depression. This group includes intense studies on wars and racial conflicts, on problems of agriculture and industry, on transportation and communication. It also includes the more subtle works dealing with the symbols

of past and present cultures and with the spiritual relationships existing between men. The creators of these visions understood the fact that human society is a constantly changing process and not a static thing. To produce understanding of society through photographs it was necessary to relate the pictures in a meaningful way.

In general, the history of photography, from its invention to the present, seems to be divided into three major periods. From 1839 to about 1885, the photographer tried to record the face of the world in an objective way. He roamed far and wide to capture the images of foreign people and places never before seen by his ex-

*arthur siegel* is one of the most vital of present-day photographers, and his work has been featured in many shows and magazines, most recently in several pages of *Life* magazine. He was formerly head of the Photography Department of the Institute of Design and, preceding that, was in charge of the photo lab at Chanute Field, Ill., during the war. He has also worked with the Historical Branch of the Farm Security Administration and the Office of War Information.



cited audience. But whether he traveled in exotic lands or remained at home, the photographer was satisfied with his records of surface appearances and felt no need to search beneath that surface with his camera.

From 1885 to about 1918, the great photographic movements, particularly the Photo-Secession, concerned themselves with the superimposition of the photographer's personality over the subject matter in terms of stylistic mannerisms. The personality of the "photographic artist" manifested itself by destroying the machine-made image by controlled handwork and the misguided copying of certain Victorian

painters' vision. This ultimately led to the stereotyped seeing of the present-day pictorialists, whose work is usually devoid of any personal meaning.

From 1918 to the present, the flowering of mass production raised tremendous problems of distribution and the ownership of goods. Such new methods of communication and transportation as the radio and the airplane compressed the world and made neighbors of those who had never before heard of each other. New dynamic psychologies, such as Freud's studies, gave man the ability to explore more deeply than ever before his inner needs, wishes and fears. Science even

gave man the power to destroy himself completely: the atom and hydrogen bombs. During that time the sincere photographers became increasingly aware of deeper implications. They consciously explored beneath the surface chaos of man's world to discover the relationships and significance of outer appearances.

The conscious documentary attitude toward photography developed in this last period and it is not surprising that, as a result of the complications of life in the 20th century, photography evolved a discipline that is directly concerned with these problems and attempts to suggest possible solutions. Who were the men who first adopted this attitude and what were the problems that challenged them?

As this century began, America's rapidly expanding machine economy with its promise of economic freedom set up a powerful attraction to the oppressed of Europe. They poured into New York City and other ports in an overwhelming flood. In the 10 years between 1903 and 1913, 10 million immigrants arrived in the land of plenty with high hopes. Ill equipped by language and training to cope with the new culture, they were forced to begin on the lowest rungs of the cultural ladder. Working in sweat shops and at back-breaking manual labor, exploited by landlord and employer, they created terrific problems of education, housing, health and integration into the new society.

Lewis Hine, trained as a sociologist, began photographing these people and their problems in 1903. His pictures made vivid the exploitation of children and adults alike. Penetrating into the miserable living and working conditions of slum tenements and the sweatshops, he exposed these sores to the conscience of the public. The resulting indignation helped, to some extent, to destroy these evils. After World War I, he documented the Red Cross relief activities in middle European countries and his pictures revealed the vast human suffering caused by the war and the great need for relief. In the later years of his life, Hine was concerned with the affirmation of the dignity of labor. His work portraits clearly showed the resourceful skill and the pride in a job well done.

Lewis Hine was the classic documentary photographer. His work at the beginning of the century provided a pattern to follow and develop. Working in a limited social area at a given



EUGENE ATGET



time in history, photographic analysis provided a rich basis for understanding of and action upon many social problems. When he stated, "I wanted to show the things that had to be corrected. I wanted to show the things that had to be appreciated," he defined very simply the documentary attitude.

Across the continent in San Francisco in a tight ghetto, was an older immigrant, the Chinese. Imported in the early days of the gold rush and the building of the railroads, he was not allowed to assimilate into the general community. He functioned as servant, cook, fishcutter, laundryman and small farmer. Gradually, he was built up to be a menace to American labor, and Congress finally passed the Exclusion Law preventing him from becoming an American citizen.

Arnold Genthe photographed San Francisco's Chinatown for about 10 years until it was destroyed in the earthquake of 1906. He used a small hand camera which allowed him to photograph his subjects unaware. He tried to show the Chinese as human beings, who traded, gambled, loved and hated in the manner of other people. His pictures of Chinatown are on the picturesque side, obviously influenced by the prevailing 'artistic' photography, but they are a noble and early use of the candid camera. Genthe's photographs of the San Francisco earthquake must also be mentioned. They provided an insight into the effects of a great natural catastrophe. The disruption of normal community life was clearly shown and helped to bring aid to the stricken city.

Meanwhile, in Paris, working in obscurity from 1898 to 1927 was Eugene Atget. His influence on his photographic contemporaries was nil, and not until his rescue from oblivion by Berenice Abbott in the early 30's was his power felt. Essentially a romantic, he photographed Paris with the single-mindedness of a man in love. Working with a large camera on a tripod, he warmly examined its people, shops, buildings, interiors and exteriors, palace and pauper's place, street signs, vehicles and vegetation. Here are lyrical images, peaceful pictures. A man examining with tenderness and understanding the symbols of a fast vanishing 19th century. In the 30's, the widespread publication of Atget's pictures affected many photographers. His directness of vision, his richly organ-

ized tones and textures were adopted by many photographers for their own purposes.

From the end of the first world war until the 30's, America produced undreamed of physical bounty. Everyone worked, the stock market values steadily increased, women were emancipated from many previous moral, economic and political shackles, prohibition produced a disrespect for the law and everyone enjoyed more physical comforts. But there were a few questioning souls who wondered about the loss of spiritual values. Among these was Alfred Stieglitz.

From the early days of the 90's

Stieglitz had used his camera as a tool for exploring men and their spiritual relationships. In the 20's, a series of one-man shows demolished the old concepts of portraiture. Previously, the photographer had made portraits in the imitation of the painter and tried to synthesize into one image all the qualities of the individual. Stieglitz demonstrated a new kind of portrait based on the camera's ability to analyse and to isolate small areas. Some of his portraits had as many as 45 images in a group. He showed that a portrait could be something more than a head and that a group of images consisting of parts of the body



WALKER EVANS

could together produce a new kind of portrait.

Photographic portraiture has never been the same since these exhibits. Aside from the portraits of people, he made portraits of the city. The city had become an overpowering group of monuments that were engulfing men. The human values were being devoured by the machine age. Apart from his photographic work, Stieglitz stood as a spiritual oasis in a materialistic desert. Writers, painters and photographers who were wondering and questioning gathered around him for stimulation and strength. Among these was Paul Strand, who in 1916 had already made huge candid close-ups of the hurt and dwarfed city people.

In 1920, Strand continued his exploration of the city and made a poetic documentary motion picture of New York with Charles Sheeler. They looked down from the towers of Manhattan to the little ants below. New angles were exploited to jolt the observer into awareness. In 1929, Strand expanded his vision with a series made in the Gaspé. The formal and precise ordering of land, people, boats, houses, sky proclaimed that a new level of visual organization for the

documentary photographer had been achieved.

In Mexico at this time was Edward Weston. Participating in the Mexican renaissance, he was developing an intensive portraiture and a feeling for landscape and its forms that greatly enriched the documentary tradition of the 30's. He also had discovered the powerful meaning of signs and the relation of buildings to people. All of these elements fused in his later work in California and the west to produce a new kind of lyrical documentary image.

At the same time Steichen was discovering and exploiting the rich potential of controlled artificial light sources. In a series of sculptural portraits and vivid advertisements, he added a new rich vocabulary of light use to the language of the photographs. With the invention and common use of flashbulbs in the 30's, this vocabulary was put to immediate use.

In 1925 the Leica began to come into common use. Here was a new tool that could be used almost as a direct extension of the eye. It was light in weight, precise in use and enabled the photographer to invade new domains previously denied to him because of his cumbersome camera or

fearful flash powder. Pioneers like Dr. Erich Salomon and Paul Wolff used the little instrument to explore quick expressions and psychological situations that were the grandfathers of the later intensive and strange images of Cartier-Bresson and Helen Levitt. In 1927, Moholy-Nagy's book, *Light: Photography: Film*, made conscious the power of photomontage and the new vision of the scientific image.

On Black Friday of October 1929, the bubble of easy living exploded, blowing America into a period of self-analysis and a search for a new set of values. Photographers like Berenice Abbott and Walker Evans returned to the United States from Europe and focused their eyes on their native land. Abbott documented a changing New York City, and Evans surveyed the East and South with the critical eye of a cultural anthropologist. Although he worked with a large camera, Evans produced a series of brilliant psychological portraits and his photographs of buildings had the flavor of the people living in them whether they were actually present or not. He produced a powerful series of cultural fragments and symbols that did for the social scene what Stieglitz had done for portraits in the 20's.

WALTER ROSENBLUM





(from Brooklyn Museum Show)

VICTOR LAREDO

As the economic crisis deepened, it called forth reactions in terms of a new kind of large scale social planning. To explain these problems and the attempts at solutions it was necessary to inaugurate a new kind of collaborative interpretation of the American scene. Roy Stryker, as head of the Farm Security Administration's Historical Branch, was the brilliant midwife of this new conscious form of visual communication. Aware of the impact of photographs and words from his experimentation in teaching economics at Columbia University, Stryker conceived a vast portrait of America. He assembled a sensitive group of photographers, each of whom used his own photographic technique from Walker Evans' 8x10 to Arthur Rothstein's and Ben Shahn's Leica.

Stryker encouraged their social growth by providing facts in the form of maps, pamphlets and books. But most important, his own person was a constant challenge to the photographers to understand the hidden social process behind the obvious picture. Not the America of the unique, odd or unusual happening, but the America of how to mine a piece of

coal, grow a wheat field or make an apple pie. The America of "what does it mean," not the America of "amuse me."

Out of this project came significant works like Walker Evans' *American Photographs*, Sherwood Anderson's *Hometown*, Richard Wright's and Ed

Roskam's *12,000,000 Black Voices*, Archibald Macleish's *Land of the Free* and Dorothea Lange and Paul S. Taylor's terrific study of the displaced tenant farmer, *An American Exodus*.

Other photographers were affected by the F.S.A. project. The Photo League in New York under the sensitive direction of Aaron Siskind produced some memorable group documentations such as the famous *Harlem Document*. Margaret Bourke-White with Erskine Caldwell examined the South in *You Have Seen Their Faces*. In England, Bill Brandt was looking into the structure of family life and the contrasts of social classes. Many of his pictures, taken with the Leica, are among the great, sensitive pictures of the time. In France, Brassai was exploring the underworld and half-world of Paris. His pictures were penetrating analyses of the night creatures in a great metropolis. They were early forerunners of Weegee's raw and almost brutal *Naked City*, his study of New York's night life. In Germany, Lerski made close-ups with an 11x14 camera and many sources of light to reveal the structure and surface of the human head in an almost terrifying way.

The new problems produced by the world wide depression profoundly influenced the moviemakers. England's brilliant John Grierson, trained as a sociologist, organized film groups for the Empire Marketing Board and the Post Office. Employing the creative editing principles developed by the Russians in the 20's, these films made

MARTIN ELKORT



the phrase "documentary film" a common term. In Holland, Joris Ivens was exploring the social impact of land changes caused by damming the Zinder Zee. America, too, was producing a new kind of film; Pare Lorentz produced the *Plow That Broke the Plains*, a searching study of the causes of the Dust Bowl, beautifully photographed by Paul Strand and Leo Hurwitz. Lorentz also produced that classic study of soil erosion, *The River*. Even Hollywood came through with the memorable *Grapes of Wrath*. However, it is only recently that the full impact of the documentary approach has dawned on the "Motion Pictures Are Your Best Entertainment" producers.

In this period the creative editing of still pictures for social understanding came to its first flowering. At the bottom of the depression in 1932 appeared Charles Gross' little known, but still jolting, montages of pictures, charts, clippings (*A Picture of America*) which shocked the observer into economic awareness. In 1933 Roger and Allen showed in their *American Procession* the folkways of America from the Civil War to the World War. In the following year they dissected New York from a sociological point of view in the book, *Metropolis*.

That same year, Pare Lorentz presented *The Roosevelt Year*, an interpretive record of the first days of the New Deal. This book has become a landmark for those who are interested in the visualization of social history. In 1935 M. Lincoln Schuster edited *Eyes on the World*. Its prophetic implications of future war and analysis of the forces that were leading up to the catastrophe deserve special mention. Later Anita Brenner and George R. Leighton collaborated on *The Wind That Swept Mexico*, a profound and moving fusion of news, pictures and text.

By 1936 the editing method in books had been firmly established and the time was ripe for its use in a weekly periodical. *Life* magazine burst on the scene. From its lead story by Margaret Bourke-White on a Montana mining town through the recent wonderful issue devoted to education, *Life* has used and helped develop the documentary approach. Arthur Rothstein and John Vachon of F.S.A. fame have enriched the pages of *Look* with their pictures made in this spirit. The *Ladies Home Journal* picture editor, John Morris, has produced the notable series, "How America Lives."

As the depression disappeared under the impact of social planning and the new rearmament program, the world saw in Spain a preliminary to the main bout. In 1938, Robert Capa presented his haunting *Death in the Making*, pictures created by a man who was not only brave, but also sensitive to what was happening beneath the surface events. In Finland, Carl Mydans was probing the war and sharpening his eye for his brilliant later observation of the Pacific fighting. M. Therese Bonney's heart-wrenching pictures of *Europe's Children* appeared.

But these examples were lost on the armed forces in World War II. Photography was considered news-oriented record-making that could be taught in three months and was beneath the dignity of an officer's activity. Where previously trained documentary photographers were in the services, they were generally misused. With the sole exceptions of Steichen's wonderful documentary unit in the Navy (producing among many other projects, the long to be remembered *Fighting Lady*) and Pare Lorentz' unit in the Air Transport Command, the best pictures of the war were usually produced by photographers outside of the services like W. Eugene Smith who documented the Pacific soldier. Some signs of this news-oriented misconception are beginning to appear again in the present State Department's rapidly expanding Voice of America picture operation.

In 1939 Julian Bryan recorded the disintegration of Warsaw under the impact of the Nazi air force. His *Siege* brought home to the American observer the devastation of modern war. In 1941 Bourke-White recorded the war's impact on Moscow. Forcing us to consider what we were fighting for, this period brought out documentary collections of belief and affirmation like Alexander Aland's study of the fabric of different nationality groups that make the cloth of America. Ansel Adams' portraits of Japanese-Americans in *Born Free and Equal* was a protest against the concentration camps on the West Coast.

With the end of the war new searchings began. Wayne Miller of Steichen's Navy unit produced an exciting, but as yet unpublished series on the Negro in the North. Wright Morris, on a Guggenheim grant, critically examined in sensitive words and pictures the effects of people on the structures they live in (*The Inhabitants*) and

later made a nostalgic re-examination of the disappearing rural scene (*The Home Place*). Todd Webb explored New York and found new facets of buildings and people. Paul Strand and Nancy Newhall have dug deep into the New England tradition in their just published *Time in New England*. In this series Strand attains new heights of observation and interpretation. John Collier's fruitful collaboration with an anthropologist resulted in *The Awakening Valley*, a fascinating study of an Indian culture in Ecuador. Published by the University of Chicago Press, it opened a new era of scholarly communication. Steinbeck and Capa presented the life of a common citizen in their *A Russian Journal*.

Using photographers such as Esther Bubley, John Vachon, Ed Rosskam, Harold Corsini, Arnold Eagle, John Collier, Charles Rotkin, Russell Lee, Gordon Parks and Todd Webb, Roy Stryker documented the social ramifications of the oil industry for Standard Oil of New Jersey in a manner never before attempted by industry. Out of this project came one of the most exciting documentary books ever made. Edwin and Louise Rosskam's *Towboat River*, a study of the Mississippi, is a new classic in the use of word and picture to capture the unique flavor of people at work and the environment that produces this work.

To sum up documentary photography of the last 50 years, the following trends are evident:

1. From physical appearance to spiritual relationships
2. From accidental to formal visual organization
3. From single techniques to multiple techniques
4. From single pictures to creative editing
5. From individual worker to group collaboration.

What of the future? As man lives he creates social problems. A fast expanding scientific technology, the clash of political and economic theories, Africa and Asia being brought from feudalism into the 20th century, all combine to produce tremendous problems of action and understanding. That the documentary attitude will expand its techniques and understandings is a foregone conclusion. The documentary photographer of the future bears a tremendous responsibility; let us hope he is adequate to his task.





W. EUGENE SMITH

*smith*

*duncan*

*mydans*

# *reportage*

CARL MYDANS

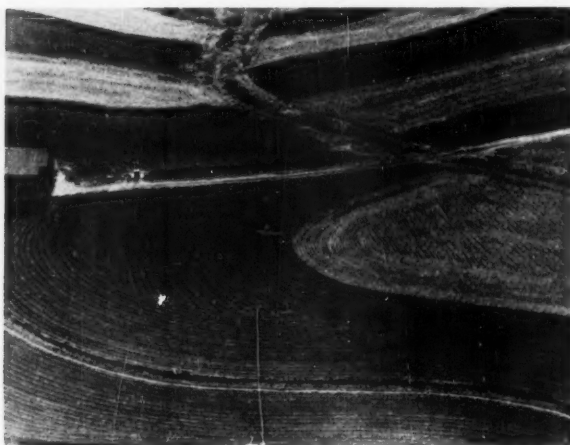


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*an art-form surrenders  
to commercial requirements*

*A*fter much early experimentation, motion pictures as we know them became possible with the manufacture of flexible film. George Eastman began quantity production after June 1896. To everyone's surprise, the nickelodeon (the first one opened in 1905) became amazingly popular. The first fiction movie, *The Great Train Robbery*, an 800-foot reel starring Marie Murray and made in 1903, was ready for them and others began coming as the demand grew.

The success of these houses stimulated film production to keep ahead of their audiences, and the



FRANCES FLAHERTY

*The Plow That Broke the Plains*

(Courtesy Museum of Modern Art)

industry grew rapidly in the first two decades of the century. The first world war gave America her big opportunity. Film production came to a halt in Europe and war-fortunes soon burgeoned here to be attracted to the golden profit opportunities offered by the movies. Commercially, America has held the lead in film production ever since, and our technical facilities have continually paced the rest of the world, which lives on more limited budgets.

When the voice of Al Jolson said, "Hey, Mom, listen to this!" from a sound track in 1926, the movies took on a new dimension. Warner Bros., nearly bankrupt, had succeeded in a wild gamble and the public filled the houses showing this "talking picture." In the next years, no matter how bad a picture was, if it had dialogue it was financially successful, while the last of the silents, no matter how expertly done, played to empty seats.

Sound films, of course, increased the necessary investment in movie production and if there was ever any moment when films would have been judged, at their point of production, by other standards than their commercial success, that moment was now passed. To the producers, as costs multiplied, there seemed to be only one way to find an adequate return on the capital: to make films for the lowest denominator of public taste and to offend no one.

Sociological surveys have found that the 19-year-old is the enthusiastic movie-goer. Those over 30 attend movies irregularly if at all. Literally no one is making movies which appeal to a mature audience. All the campaigns around such slogans as "Movies are your best entertainment" will not alter this fact.

It is particularly serious in view of the coming of television. A movie screen will soon be in the majority of homes. Since camera techniques and the possibility of editing offer very considerable advantages over "live" shows, except for special types of programs, much of the production will be in the hands of those equipped to produce movies—the very ones who have shown themselves incapable of producing for the adult members of the family audience.

This is probably the most critical problem in public communication today. Both Hollywood and the radio developed in such a manner that they are geared to the mass-production of trivia. It will be most unfortunate if television succeeds only in presenting a revived vaudeville in the evenings and the Goldbergs in the daytime.

All of this is not to imply that there are no movies in the vaults or on display which are worth attending. There have been many, particularly from independent producers. In addition, the non-fiction film has slowly developed into an independent medium, although little has been done since V-J Day to exploit its full potentials.

There have also been a number of experiments, most of them made with inadequate budgets and by amateurs learning as they went along. Some, like *The Quiet One*, have advanced cinema. In

commercial production the Italians are currently demonstrating that semi-documentary techniques, despite inadequate technical facilities, put new life into fiction-films.

There have been a number of histories written of the films, from a few on the level of the fan-magazine to serious sociological studies. *The Film Till Now*, while it represents an individual viewpoint, has been one of the best. Now that it is back in print with a new section covering the recent years, it will be a welcomed addition to the library of every student of the film.

# "the film till now"



Charles Chaplin in *M. Verdoux*  
(Courtesy Museum of Modern Art)

**i**t is quite fitting, in reviewing the past half-century of photographic development, to examine a recent book\* which traces the growth of motion pictures from 1900-1948.

The 175 illustrations are from representative films of all nations and, since they include prints from the time of movies' beginning in 1898, are themselves a special treat to all interested in the history of movies. Appendix One of the book lists the production units of some 260 outstanding cinemas in the categories of

\* *The Film Till Now, A Survey of World Cinema*, PAUL ROTH and RICHARD GRIFITH, revised and enlarged edition, 730 pages, 175 illustrations, Vision Press Ltd., London, 1950. \$12.00.

fiction, documentary and specialty. This catalog is of prime value for reference purposes, covering as it does leading films from 1914 to 1948.

When the first edition of this book appeared in 1929, co-author Paul Rotha was regarded as an enthusiastic upstart in the British film industry. He had been engaged for a time in a business capacity in a studio, a job clearly not suited to his temperament. "My youthful impetuosity," he writes, "led me to criticize the lack of creative opportunities in the studio where I worked and within a few days I was out in the street with nothing in my pocket."

Even after the initial success of his

book, Mr. Rotha still found studio gates closed to him—until he met John Grierson, who gave him a chance to make documentary films. Since that time, he has been active as a producer. But he also has found time to write several good cinema books, including *The Film Till Now*.

Paul Rotha is one of our most capable writers on the subject of motion pictures; he loves his medium as an artist loves form and color and as a musician loves harmony in sound. He is a capable film creator, thinker and

**arthur l. marble** has contributed regularly to photographic magazines since his high school days when he was a contributor and editor of *Photo-Era*, which was later combined with *AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHY*. He has specialized in the field of audio-visual education and was granted a doctor of philosophy degree in this field by the University of Southern California. He served during the war as an aviation ground school instructor and is now a contributing editor of *International Photographer*.





*The Maltese Falcon*, John Huston, Director  
(Courtesy Museum of Modern Art)

a forceful writer whose opinions provoke thought.

The major part of *The Film Till Now* is devoted to a critical appraisal of the film output of all countries that have produced films available on the world market. The authors have accomplished this task thoroughly and with distinction. It is natural that the opinions expressed concerning films would be challenged by many readers.

In *The Film Till Now* there is a very clear explanation for the movie box office being in the financial doldrums at present. The film industry has not spent a great deal of time nor money on experimentation, on schools of the cinema or in giving men of ideas a chance to express themselves on the screen. "Without new ideas and themes, new and vigorous personnel, new ways of using the camera and microphone, new aspirations and incentives, the business of picture-making will decline." This applies to documentaries, newsreels and cartoons as much as it does to feature production.

Mr. Rotha loves experimentation in the cinema as much as he does freedom of expression. He feels that a few producers are still free to experiment in subject matter as well as treatment of themes.

The most exciting films since the war have come from a small group of filmmakers in Italy, who, like the Russians in the mid-twenties and the British documentary movement in the thirties, have rediscovered the simple fact that imagination and inventiveness are worth all the technical paraphernalia of the luxury studios if you have something to say. With scanty film stock and crude equipment, a handful of Italian films, of which *Paisan*, *Open City*, *The Miracle*, *Terra Firma*, *Four Steps in the Clouds*, and *Under the Roman Sun* are among the most outstanding, have shown us again what vitality, sincerity and real skill mean in film making.

As Mr. Rotha has worked both in theatrical films and in the documentary field, his study views the two main types of films impartially and with a sympathetic understanding of the distinct requirements of each. He makes clear, too, that the two fields often overlap—that documentary techniques may often be applied to feature films and vice versa. We might even add that producers of documentary and of feature films might strengthen their own work by experience in a different type of film than that to which they are accustomed.

One might suppose that as the technical resources of the motion picture increase, such as the addition of sound,

it would be easier to make good motion pictures. But we agree with Mr. Rotha that as the number of film gadgets multiply, it becomes harder to compose a film because "... only a few balanced minds will be able to pick the good from the bad." Incidentally, this may help to explain why it proves more difficult to make a good sound film than a good silent one.

Rotha suggests that many films have been made in the past under the false assumption that all tastes are alike—mostly adolescent in nature. The time has come, he contends, to make films for more specialized interests, tastes and levels of culture.

Slogans like "movies are better than ever" will be borne out as a permanent fact on the screens when the industry begins to regard as necessities the constant training of youth, the search and try-out of new ideas and the belief that everyone who works on a film should have a personal stake in a good picture.

Mr. Rotha expresses great admiration for the documentary films which were produced during World War II. "I must record my own respect for the fine work of those in Hollywood and elsewhere who were anonymously behind the making of such magnificent



films as *The Fighting Lady*, *The Battle of San Pietro*, *Let There Be Light*, and of course, the famous *Why We Fight* series which provoked even the Soviet cinematographers to praise." Perhaps the war gave these movie-makers a freedom of expression not found in the usual Hollywood product. If our best film talents could use part of their fine ability in producing informational films on the true meaning of democracy and peace, the history of the next 50 years might be changed for the better.

Some will criticize this book because the author has not rewritten the observations and prophecies he made concerning films some 20 years ago. We agree with Mr. Rotha that this material—even his mistaken prophecies concerning the future of dialog film—is more interesting as it stands and his recent footnote comments in retrospect add interest and charm. It is his delightful candor and gift for self-criticism that sets the author apart from those who are prone to take themselves too seriously.

The last part of the book, called "The Film Since Then," reviews worldwide developments of the cinema since the advent of sound pictures and is written by Richard Griffith, who is now

assistant to the director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. Mr. Griffith recalls the days of the silent motion picture when one could "walk into a darkened theatre, to focus upon a bright rectangle of moving light, to listen somewhat below the level of consciousness to music which was no longer good or bad in itself but merely in relation to what was on the screen, and above all to watch, in a kind of charmed hypnotic trance, a pattern of images which appeared and disappeared as capriciously as those pictures which involuntarily present themselves to the mind as it is dropping off to sleep . . . this was an experience complete and unique, radically unlike that provided by the older arts or by the other media of mass communication." It has become the outstanding art-experience of modern times.

Excellent as Mr. Griffith's part of the book is, a few ideas might be suggested. No mention is made, for example, of the new type of film development, the television film, which may well have a growing influence on the film industry as a whole, because possibly in the future there may be millions whose only contact with motion pictures will be through their television sets at home. We feel that any recent

survey of the motion picture should at least mention the growing power and influence of films that are made primarily for television. The author might consider also whether the time may come when outdated television films will be shown in theatres that specialize in such revivals—reversing television's present plan of showing old theatrical films.

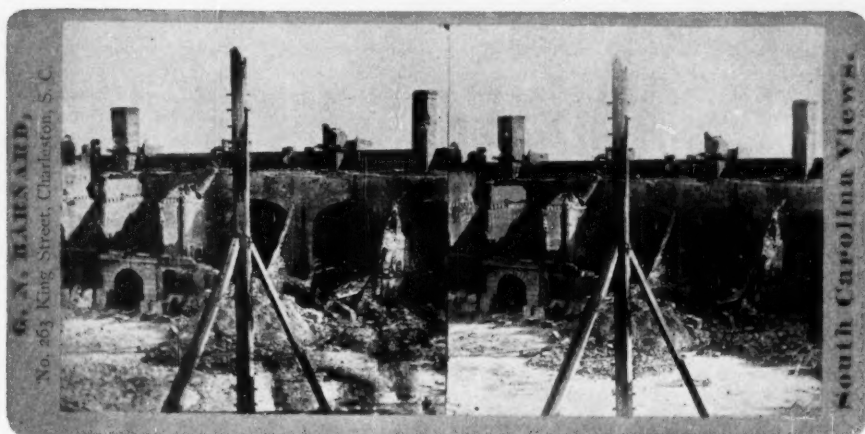
The film enthusiast may find that this book leaves him with mingled feelings of pride and of hope—pride in the accomplishments of the film industry so far and hope that the future will see even greater developments. Actually, the vast potentialities of the screen—both in entertainment and in education—have hardly been scratched. In the words of Rotha:

The screen's reflection of a people's character and ideals and traditions, its unlimited power to create goodwill and promote understanding, its unequalled importance as a medium for public communication, are motives which have been largely overlooked in the scramble to monopolize the universal show business. Governments, banks, insurance companies, electrical cartels and other holders of big capital guide the destiny of the motion picture medium rather than the creative artists who seek to use it as an outlet for their ideas and imagination.

(Courtesy Museum of Modern Art)

Stella Dallas, Henry King, Director





(Courtesy George Eastman House)

The Civil War

### *stereo survives a temporary eclipse*

**I**n the 19th century the stereoscope was the most enchanting parlor toy of the period, and every visitor was handed the Holmes viewer (or some later modification) for his edification and amusement. The rise of the snapshot forced the stereo as a common delight into a temporary eclipse, but it should be no source of surprise that it has not merely survived but has developed greatly in technique, and that thousands of amateurs are passionately devoted to it.

The most real split in picture-making is not between the pictorialists and those using a more modern idiom, but between those who are working for the most satisfactory presentation of an image on a flat surface and those who are working for the elimination of that surface, working for a complete illusion of the re-creation of the original in depth and color.

This has been an old dream, but photography has brought it close to realization. It apparently will not be long before it will be common for everyone to have available means for realizing the ultimate illusion of reality, depth, movement and color.

Painting once had this as its goal, as witness such attempts as Daguerre's diorama and other ambitious endeavors to create the semblance of reality. Painting has left this behind for other goals as has a large segment of photography.

But the one activity is as legitimate as the other. For some purposes the illusion of reality is most desirable; in others, the representation on a sur-

face will accomplish the maker's and the audience's purpose more completely.

Stereo appeals particularly to those who see the real world through appreciative eyes and prefer the scenes to be reproduced with the greatest illusion of fidelity so they may almost experience it directly rather than through the interpretive personality of an intervening artist.

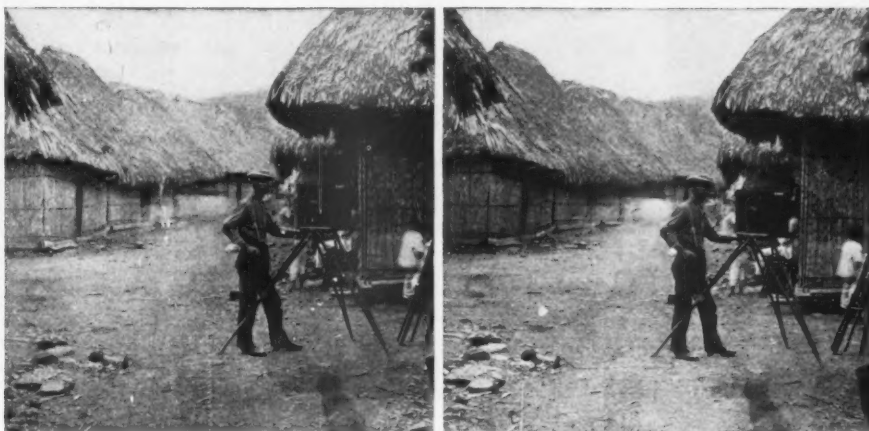
Stereo serves a great many practical purposes as well. In science particularly, where art as such is irrelevant, stereo is a tool for much valuable record making, and such techniques as stereo x-rays have made the surgeon's work surer and safer.

The second world war gave another great stimulus to stereoscopy. Much of military intelligence would have been non-existent without the techniques of photo-interpretation, especially of stereo pairs. Experienced observers were able to study these prints and to make astonishing conclusions from them—more accurate in some cases than if they had actually wandered over the enemy ground itself.

This stimulation has been followed by much quiet research since the war, and a number of tech-

nical innovations are scheduled for release in the near future, some of them soon in the pages of this magazine.

Among the leaders in this field is Herbert C. McKay, who has been conducting a regular monthly column in these pages for 27 years, a record for any column and especially for one in such a rapidly-changing field as photography. This long period of contributing to photographic knowledge is due in no little part to his habit of never "compiling" material, but of personally experimenting to check facts before reporting them.



The Panama Canal

## stereoscopy in this century

*W*hen Caesar's Legions crossed the Channel to conquer Britain, stereoscopy was almost two centuries old, for Euclid had noted the phenomenon in 280 B.C. A century later the immortal physician Galen recorded its characteristics. The fact of the relation between binocular vision and depth perception is far from recent, as so many believe. But knowledge of fact and making practical ap-

plication of it are quite different.

Stereoscopic drawings were made in the 16th century by de la Sarto and within that century the word *stereoscopic* made its appearance. Here we have the practical application almost four centuries ago. Then what of the work of Wheatstone and Brewster a scant century ago? Theirs, too, was a significant contribution, for both made stereoscopes which made it

possible to view stereoscopic images with ease and comfort. But the development of stereo involved the convergence of many lines of human endeavor: stereoscopy, photography and polarization of light. Each has a fascinating history of its own, but the combination makes it manifestly absurd to point out any one individual and say, "He discovered stereoscopy."

It is easier for us to find the origin of our own field, however, because stereoscopic photography obviously is a hybrid of stereoscopy and photography. Two men gave us this art, one of them the only man who with any reason or logic can be named the inventor of photography, Fox-Talbot. Brewster and Fox-Talbot working to-

*berbert c. mckay* has more "firsts" to his credit than any other photographic writer. He was first to write about miniature camera as a serious instrument, first to write a book on stereo, first to conduct a network radio show on photography, among many others. He has published 10 books as well as many booklets and articles. He is a Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society and a member of the American Society of Cinematographers and is recognized as an authority not only in stereo but in many other fields as well.





World War I

(Courtesy George Eastman House)

gether produced the first photo-stereograms.

Modern stereo would be lost without polarization. Not only does modern stereo projection depend upon it, but the most successful of all "free vision" processes are based upon the same phenomenon, and that is the Vectograph, which is marked by the absence of the grave disadvantages of the grid, lenticular and other free-vision processes.

Previous to 1900 the projection lantern was king. It not only held a place somewhat similar to that of the slide projector of today, it also held the place now occupied by the motion picture. Naturally, as soon as the stereoscopic photograph was generally known, a demand came for projected stereograms. The solution was provided. The two pictures were projected in approximate superposition, one green and the other red. These were viewed through the familiar red-green goggles, and stereo projection was an accomplished fact. Today this method is applied to transparencies printed in two colors and projected by an ordinary slide (or motion picture) projector. The term *anaglyph* was given these transparencies, but today we differentiate between the chromatic anaglyph and the polar anaglyph.

Polarized stereo projection was patented in the late years of the 19th century, but the patent as issued, based upon the use of cumbrous Nicolprisms, was not practical.

A veritable battle of titans gave birth to modern stereo, the battle between Sir David Brewster and Sir Charles Wheatstone. The pictures of the two men culled from reports differ widely from those gained from their own correspondence. Wheatstone is reported as a shy, retiring man with little ability to lecture; Brewster is acclaimed as one of the immortal band of genius, but with the bar sinister. As

reported in the Encyclopaedia Britannica: "The bent of his genius was not characteristically mathematical. His method was empirical and the laws which he established were the result of repeated experiment." In short he was a genuine scientist, even though condemned for that very fact.

But from their correspondence we find Wheatstone a cold and calculating man, vicious in argument. His



thin line of true scientists who will eventually become the type of all science: men who care not for what should be, what might be, but what is, and can be physically demonstrated to exist. Today the worst burden under which stereo labors is the load of wild scientific theory which is plausible but which cannot be demonstrated; in fact, theory which can easily be proved false through simple experiment.

Wheatstone made the first stereoscope, the cumbrous mirror type of instrument now used to view large stereo x-rays. Brewster insists that this was made after he consulted with Wheatstone about stereo. Brewster followed with the stereoscope which now bears his name (and that of Holmes), which made use of lens segments, or spherical prisms. This development made stereoscopic photography practical for general use.

Brewster's stereoscope was a box with lenses mounted in sliding tubes. It was bulky and awkward to handle.



World War II

(Courtesy U. S. Navy Department)

first aim seemed to be personal aggrandizement, his second the preservation of the sanctity of the Royal Society. Much of his "science" was based upon mouldering "authorities" and reviewing the work of his contemporaries. In short he could have held his own in the scientific world of 1950! Brewster was a pugnacious, surly Scot, but subject to a driving force to know the truth—not the truth of preceding authority, not the truth of contemporary workers, not a truth guessed at through mathematical computations, but the real truth which can be revealed only through actual experiment. Characteristically, just as now, his undeniable discoveries were assailed because he actually demonstrated facts instead of showing that such and such fact should be true!

In short Brewster was one of the

Oliver Wendell Holmes, an enthusiastic stereo photographer, drew up designs for a fixed focus, skeleton viewer and had some of these made up with the help of Joseph L. Bates. Bates himself took a hand and added the sliding stereogram holder to provide focusing. The Holmes-Bates viewers were almost identical in design to the Holmes stereoscopes sold today, even to the bent wire stereogram supports!

This common parlor stereoscope, once so familiar in American homes, has the optics of Brewster, the skeleton form of Holmes and the sliding focus of Bates; so call it what you will. *Holmes* is most widely used in this country to designate this type of viewer.

About a decade after the Brewster stereoscope was introduced to the world, cameras were made with nor-



mal separation, i.e., 65mm more or less, and the lens segments of the Brewster viewer were replaced by the spherical lenses of the "normal" stereoscope. Both types have certain advantages, but the lenticular type is the one known most widely at present.

When stereo was at the height of its popularity, Muybridge was conducting those experiments which finally led to the motion picture. Again there came the demand, "Give us stereo movies," and again the demand was met. It may come as a surprise to many readers to learn that the use of true stereo movies in public theatres is now a good quarter-century old. The writer saw one exhibited in a popular Broadway theatre in the general period of the 30's. Polar-anaglyphic movies were shown at the world's fairs in Chicago and New York. Many amateurs have made perfectly successful stereo movies, and stereo television has already been broadcast. The whole story is known, the apparatus and technique simple! Then why do we not have them? Because the exhibitors have libeled the public! Their excuse is that "Our customers will not wear the goggles, too much trouble!" Do you fail to see your movies in full, glorious depth simply because you will not wear a feather-light polaroid viewer which you can forget in five seconds after you place it before your eyes?

If I am right, do not write your congressman, write your producer, distributor and local theatre manager! The system exists—perfect, complete, ready to go—and if you demand it, you will get it!

The turn of the century saw us with stereo, polar and chromo-anaglyphs, polar projection, viewers in many types and sizes, cameras . . . and then the bottom dropped out. Why? Stereographers became careless. They used paper prints with their short, flat-tone range which flattened out the depth; commercial stereograms were not well made and strained the eyes. Then, too, the novelty of the movies came along and the stereoscope became "old-fashioned." But all the time there was a tireless band of stereographers all over the world working in the field. Beautifully made precision cameras were available, as were cheaper but dependable models. They were the first efficient, small cameras made, and in those days of undependable sensitive material, many planar workers used stereo cameras because of

their compact size and the fact that a reserve negative was at hand in case one was lost through a scratch or other accident. In fact I have been told by one in a position to know that this use of 45x107 stereo cameras, after a great many years passed, brought about the design of the first miniature camera!

But the small army of workers served only to keep stereo alive with some slow progress. Attention was focussed upon free vision processes such as the grid, lenticular grid and the like, a process of undeniable value if it is ever made practical for printing press reproduction, but so far short of true stereo quality that it can hardly supplant the ortho type of stereogram. Of all these, the only one which approached satisfactory quality was the Vectograph. It was really superb and almost up to ortho quality. It is to be hoped that it will again be made available. It is not wholly free-vision, as polar goggles must be worn, but the writer is completely disgusted with the fallacious argument against the goggles, more particularly now that sun-goggles are almost as essential in our dress as skirts and trousers.

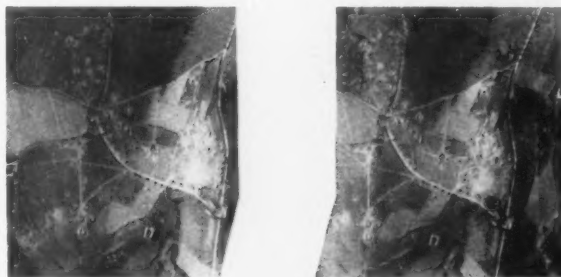
Today stereo is more popular than ever. The amateur finds in it the kind of photography of which he has dreamed. Most of the pitfalls of planar photography are eliminated. The sole argument against it is that the beginner produces pictures of as great pictorial value as the experienced worker! It is too easy and gives no room for the mystic amateur who prefers to shroud his work in a cloud of occult ritual! There is no doubt that the use of a very small camera, easily handled roll film, natural color and the elimination of the mounting bugaboo has made the revival possible. At any rate, fully satisfactory stereo and stereo

projection are here; and I may venture to add, here to stay.

True, there are hundreds of amateurs who stick to their old 3x6 inch paper prints, hundreds who still use the conventional 45x107 and 6x13 sizes, but there are thousands, too, who are now using the popular 35mm cameras such as the Realist and Verascope and using them with complete satisfaction.

What of the future, immediate and remote? Free vision will come, of course; magazines and newspapers will use stereos . . . and regardless of the perfection of technique, they will remain inferior to the ortho stereogram because of unalterable optical law which enters into ortho viewing. There seems to be little question that the casual camera user, the snapshotter, will turn almost exclusively to stereo. Stereo also will be the chosen medium of a great group of advanced and pictorial amateurs, and the friendly battle between stereo and planar no doubt will enliven the amateur world for years to come, just as the monochrome workers are still strong in the face of good color. Stereo will take its proper place, probably the greater place, in photography, but it is doubtful that it will become the exclusive photographic medium short of another century.

The immediate future? Well that is not a matter of prophecy, as many of the developments of the immediate future are now known to those engaged in the field. It is perhaps enough to say that the next 12 months are going to see developments of such nature that the present popularity of stereo will be increased many times over. One year from today we will look back and smile at what we considered a miraculous revival of stereo interest . . . we haven't even started!



World War II

(Courtesy U. S. Navy Department)

*camera clubs everywhere  
serve the queen of hobbies*

**C**amera clubs are an enduring phenomenon. A number of them, like the Boston Camera Club, are long-lived and continually active. Hobbyists, like hobbies, seem to be divided into the gregarious and the solitary, and camera hobbyists seem to be largely the former.

In the main, the clubs provide a valuable activity. Many a bewildered beginner has found the facilities and the help in them which have started him down the road to making pictures which satisfy him. Photography is more than shutter-snapping, as the beginner soon discovers, and books

and magazines are poor substitutes for personal help through the first difficult period when everything can—and usually does—go wrong. As he progresses, the clubs give him a chance to discuss photography and to show his work to an interested audience.

While some of the best-known clubs are in the larger cities, some owning or renting impressive quarters, even a small city can provide a large enough base on which to organize a strong club. It is not necessary even to have permanent quarters; successful meetings may be held in members' homes and methods demonstrated in kitchen dark-rooms. Photography, that "queen of hobbies," is just as interesting in the small town as it is everywhere else.

The clubs attract both amateurs and those professionals who are amateurs at heart, making a living with their cameras by day and making pictures for pleasure when the day is over.

The success of most clubs depends on the type of program arranged and on the picture competitions. A program with speakers and demonstrations arranged from the local professionals, out-of-town visitors, demonstrators from the various manufacturers and club members themselves will give vitality and interest. Many clubs, in addition, set up a program of help to their community or to activities in the community which are deserving of popular support. The camera is a powerful means of supporting a worthy cause, and members find their club the more interesting as the camera is put to use.



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Frank Roy Fraprie, editor of *AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHY* from 1907 to 1949, prolific exhibitor and mentor of the salon movement for many years.

# camera clubs



HORACE A. LATIMER

*i*t is always interesting to review our photographic heritage and consider the changes that have taken place over the years. For the past few weeks, we have been examining various photographs made by members of the Boston Camera Club during the past half-century. Changes in technique are quite evident and changes in viewpoint are equally evident, but whether or not any real artistic progress has been made is debatable. Perhaps some artistic historian may, 50 years from now, look back on this period and be able to assess progress adequately, but we are a bit too close to the present

to have more than what may well be a rather biased opinion.

Fortunately, we had available two collections of photographs made by Horace A. Latimer and Albert E. Schaaf, both during the early 1900's. These gentlemen were typically active camera club members of their day, and both were staunch supporters of the Boston Camera Club. In addition, other prints in the collection of the Boston Camera Club were examined, and five which cover the 50-year span, were selected for reproduction here.

In examining the Latimer and Schaaf prints, we find it quite obvious

that the early photographers were interested in very much the same subject matter as are camera club workers today. We found numerous examples of marines, landscapes, portraits and genre. We found, too, that the present vogue for large prints also existed in the early 1900's; many of Mr. Latimer's prints were as large as 24x30 inches. Almost all of the early prints were made by the various control processes. Apparently, Mr. Latimer favored the carbon process and Mr.

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*l. whitney and barbara standish* conduct our regular column, "Considering Pictures." Mr. Standish has exhibited prints for 14 years, has won many awards and had several of his prints purchased by museums. He has written extensively in photographic publications and is the author of the recent *Making Effective Photographs*. Mrs. Standish has been active in camera club work and written and lectured on photography for the last 10 years.



Schaaf specialized in bromoil. This control-process trend continued until the early 30's when its popularity began to wane and straight photography became the rule.

Many of the early Latimer prints are marvels of technique, possessing sharp and clear detail. By the standards of today we would probably feel that they lacked somewhat in tonal gradations, but these early photographers did not have the advantage of working with panchromatic emulsions

and our present day superlative printing papers.

Over the years some change was apparent in photographic viewpoint. In the early part of this period, the subject matter and treatment tended strongly toward the romantic, whereas today it is quite obvious that the pattern of our times has produced a more realistic and objective approach. The influence of technological advances in photography is quite evident, and we also find a much stronger preoccupa-

tion with the abstract principles of design. Perhaps the simplicity and convenience of present-day photographic technique puts the emphasis much more on subject and its arrangement than was possible in earlier days, when the production of an expressive picture was a considerably more laborious and time-consuming task.

We offer the five prints on these pages as representative of work by the Boston Camera Club during the past 50 years. Time, in our opinion, has not detracted from their current interest.

**1896 EVENTIDE** by Horace A. Latimer (Carbon Print) As far as subject matter and treatment are concerned, this picture might have been selected from any photographic salon of today. A silhouetted ship against a dramatic evening sky is a romantic subject and still a popular one.

This picture is well composed and the dark mass of the ship is very nicely balanced with the oppositional lines of the dramatic sky. The foreground water is simple and convincing. The modern photographer would probably have dramatized this subject further and would have achieved a somewhat more brilliant and richly graded print; however, the restrained and unaffected quality of the carbon print is appealing to us. The edges and corners are slightly overdarkened, but this is a fault that is quite often as apparent today as it was 50 years ago.

**1905 THROUGH A FRENCH VILLAGE** by Albert E. Schaaf (Bromoil Transfer) Again we have a thoroughly romantic and delightful subject handled with restraint and good taste. The vintage automobile is almost as picturesque as its surroundings.

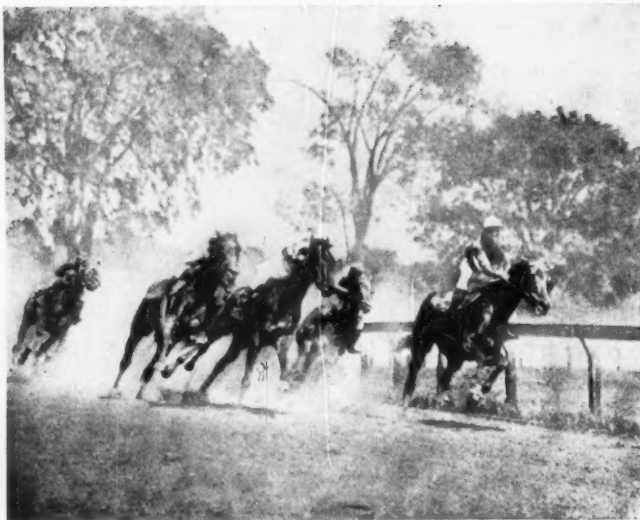
This picture is well designed. Practically every major line in the print leads to the center of interest, and the major space divisions have been carefully studied. The figure on the doorstep has been emphasized to just the right degree so that it balances but does not detract from the automobile. If the dark tree in the center were slightly lighter in tone, the print might be stronger.

This print is reminiscent of some of the aquatints of the period, but in spite of the softness of the bromoil-transfer process, it is essentially photographic in character.

**1925 SPORT OF KINGS** by Franklin I. Jordan (Bromoil) In our opinion this is one of the outstanding horse



ALBERT E. SCHAAF



FRANKLIN I. JORDAN



racing pictures of all time. We are told that "Pop" made countless negatives to obtain this beautifully arranged picture, and we can well imagine that this would be so. Regardless of the trouble he went to, it was worth it.

The strongest feature of this print is its suggestion of action and speed. Almost better than in a moving picture, we feel the drive and excitement of the horse race. This is helped, of course, by the strong repetitive diagonals of the racers aided by the simple background which, in itself, is so arranged as to suggest movement. We particularly like the horse and rider on the far left just coming around the turn and leaning to pick up speed.

In spite of the fury of the race, the print is soundly composed and very effectively presented through the medium of bromoil. Altogether a dramatic and inspiring picture.

**1935 WARMTH OF WINTER SUN** by *Frank R. Fraprie (Bromide)* This picture has been justly famous since it is probably the most successful salon print ever made. It has certainly been exhibited as much as, if not more than, any print made in the last 20 years.

As in so many successful pictures, the design of *Warmth of Winter Sun* is deceptively simple. While many have attempted to duplicate this arrangement, in our opinion none has captured successfully its simple and dignified expressiveness. The model was not posing. In fact, Mr. Fraprie had considerable difficulty in catching the old lady unawares.

The diagonal motif of the sunlight is beautifully balanced by the surrounding architecture and by the various vertical elements which are appropriately and strategically placed. Nearly every line in the picture either leads to or supports the figure.

To us the principal appeal of this picture is the sympathetic portrayal of the pathetic figure of the old lady who has managed to find her tiny and very transitory spot in the sun.

**1948 JANUARY** by *L. Whitney Standish (Chloro-bromide)* We have chosen one of our own prints as representative of the work being done in the Boston Camera Club today. This print has been quite successful during the past three years, having won many awards in various salons and exhibitions and, so far at least, it has never been rejected although entered in about 35 salons.

*January* is not merely an exercise in design, although the design element is very strong in the picture. The intention was to portray the effect of the bitter cold and wind so often experienced on a partly cloudy day during the month of January in New England. When the picture was taken, the temperature was well below zero and the photographer was close to freezing. Fortunately, the subject had been photographed often under more comfortable weather conditions; there-

fore, it did not take too much time to find the best camera position.

Essentially the design is very simple, being merely a sharp triangular composition with a repetitive use of the triangles in the three structures. This arrangement is opposed and strengthened by the subtle and sweeping lines in the sky and the foreground. The fence posts also add a strengthening accent and help to give scale to the print. Control work consisted almost entirely of dodging.



FRANK ROY FRAPRIE



L. WHITNEY STANDISH

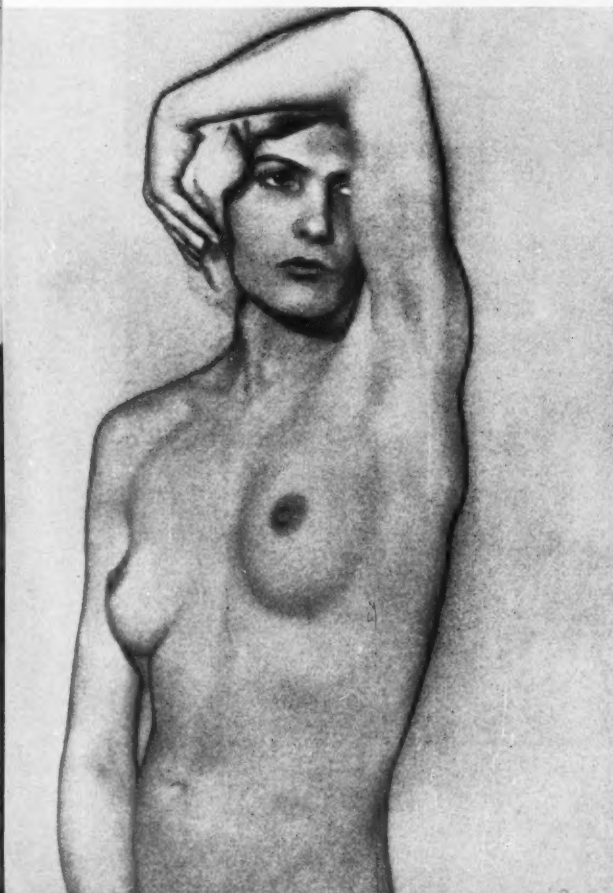
## *the painter's influence changes photographic vision*

**t**he work of Moholy-Nagy stands at a tangent to the main currents of photography, yet few individuals have been more influential in its recent development. His was the approach of the painter. He ceaselessly explored the potentialities of light, and his experiments in photography, painting and sculpture taught lessons in all three forms.

He was, as his widow has written, a "total teacher." His whole life was an outpouring of himself; those who came near him could not help collaborating with him. And he understood that the arts must embrace all of the activities of mankind.

He was not the first to bring a painter's vision to photography nor to explore new approaches to old photographic problems under the stimulus of contemporary art. Somewhat earlier, Alvin Langdon Coburn, one of the leaders of Photo-Secession, exhibited five photographs of "New York from its Pinnacles," views from high buildings which exploited the design of the surrounding ground—a new idea for the camera. Coburn was also one of

MAN RAY



the first to photograph the abstract, pointing his camera into what amounted to a kaleidoscope and recording the patterns formed within.

Not long after, Christian Schad in Germany and Man Ray, an American painter in Paris, independently reverted to one of the oldest photographic techniques, that of placing opaque or semi-transparent objects on sensitive paper and flashing it with light to produce design. Moholy-Nagy, also independently rediscovering this in the 20's, gave it its present name: photograms.

All these men, and many others, have tended to handle photography as if it were a branch of painting—in this case, of contemporary rather than of academic. If Moholy-Nagy was not the first of this group, he carried it further than any other with his ceaseless obsession with light. The force of his personality has become a legend, and he directly influenced hundreds of students through the Institute of Design in Chicago, students who, in turn, have in some measure altered the photographic vision of all of us.

The important factor, actually, is that it is an "influence" and not a major movement. The abstract has severe limitations. The critical test of a work of art is its livability when seen daily. Unless continually new relationships are discovered within it, it begins first to bore and then to annoy. Painting—in the case of abstracts—passes this test more satisfactorily than do photographs. There comes a moment when the inner relationship of an abstract black-and-white print seems to be exhausted, and it ceases to be more than merely curious.

Most photographers seem to have gone from a preoccupation with the abstract toward other forms of work, carrying with them, of course, the feeling for design and for the inner tensions within a picture which give it a richness far beyond its function as record. Only a very few, notably Aaron Siskind, have traveled from documentary into an intense world of pure (and occasionally terrifyingly frigid) abstraction.

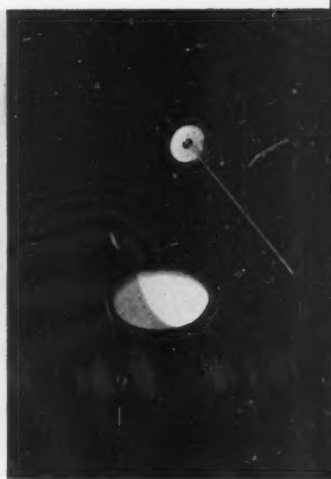
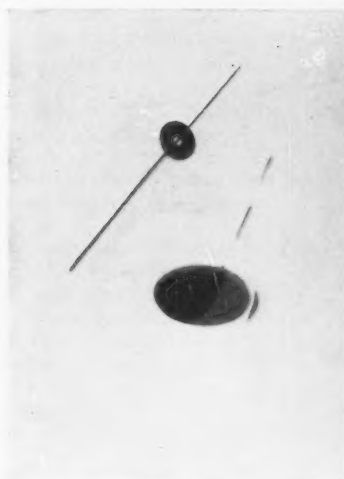
Small as is this group of workers, of whom Moholy-Nagy is best-known and most influential,

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it has done the historically-necessary job of freeing photography from its dependence on "painterish" (meaning academic) composition and shown that the camera has its own design potential.

Mrs. Sybil Moholy-Nagy, who was her husband's close collaborator, describes here the larger matrix within which his work developed and something of the point-of-view which was the inevitable result. Even in this brief discussion, something comes through of the warmth of her moving, unforgettable biography, *Moholy-Nagy, experiment in totality*.

# moboly-nagy: photographer



LASZLO MOHOLY-NAGY

**b**ehind the beginnings of modern art stands the search for a new Primitivism. Not the Primitivism of vulgarization, implying lack of tradition and craftsmanship, but a return to the purest emotional and formal sources of visual expression, a search for the original meaning of the word: *primus*, first.

It is no coincidence that this search should have been strongest and most creative in the oldest centers of western culture. France, Germany and the many components of the vast Austro-Hungarian empire gave this new art ideology its most powerful expression since, with the close of the first world war, these civilizations were deprived of a meaning that had sustained them. After the renaissance, Crown, Church and Capital had decided not only the

fate of the people but the direction of all the visual arts as well. When this triumvirate lay shattered and refuted in 1918, a young generation of artists decided it was their destiny to find new visual symbols that would ring in a new life philosophy.

With a sweep of magnificent courage, Symbolism and Realism were declared deceptive. While the one stood for an implied meaning that had fostered war and exploitation, the other had recorded the superficial facade of a world of make-believe behind which lay hidden poverty, greed and decay. Only an immersion into the pure, unadulterated components of visual values—light, color, form, space—could create the image of a supratemporal reality.

While the German Expressionists

based their work on the emotional value of color and free form, the Dutch Neo-Plasticists, the Russian Suprematists and the Hungarian Constructivists searched for a new structural equilibrium that received its justification from man's inherent drive for order. In contrast to the self-analytical subjectivity of the Expressionists, the Constructivists experimented with a formal composition that would supersede the individual and his irrelevant personal emotions. The goal was an esthetic scale of form-color-space values that would be accessible to the senses

*sibyl moboly-nagy* collaborated with her late husband on a number of films in Europe and on his two books published here (see bibliography). She also assisted at the Institute of Design and headed the summer school and Humanities Division. Her books include *Moholy-Nagy, experiment in totality*, *Children's children*, and a translation of *Klee, pedagogical sketchbook*. She has also been lecturer on the history of art at several universities.



of all men, regardless of race, color or class.

Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, born in 1895 in a remote part of Southern Hungary, was one of the leaders of this movement. By the time he had settled in Berlin in 1920, he had clarified the expressive value of form and color elements on the picture plane in many canvasses and collages. But light—the great creative binder of man's universe—evaded him. The intangible world of gradation and shadow was no closer to him than it had been to the renaissance painter. Searching for a solution, he turned to photography.

At first he was not interested in recording the world of appearances. With a fervent dedication he worked on "photograms," compositions of

form elements on light-sensitive paper which are exposed to short light-flashes in the darkroom. The results were "abstractions" of finest light values, ranging from white to black with many grey differentiations. His special interest centered around positive-negative relationships (Fig. 1 and 2) and the rich esthetic possibilities of strong visual contrasts. His close friend, Piet Mondrian, had defined Constructivism as the unification of forms through continuous opposition. Moholy saw in the photogram the ideal means to realize spatial tensions, gratifying man's need for visual rhythm.

An approach to representational photography was the next step. But it could never come through the usual delight in recording a pleasant situa-

LASZLO MOHOLY-NAGY



3.



4.



LASZLO MOHOLY-NAGY

tion with the camera. For Moholy and his generation the old social symbols had lost their traditional significance. To use them photographically could only be justified by new political meaning. This was the birth of the photomontage (Fig. 3), a pictorial composition that uses familiar images in unfamiliar arrangements. The young woman athlete, jumping under the fierce eyes of a native into a fireman's tarpaulin already occupied by a dashing young officer, represents an accumulation of typical news items tending toward a biting persiflage of our civilization.

When Moholy was ready to "shoot" pictures, he had acquired a scale of photographic means that transfigured even a gutter (Fig. 4) into a light modulator. In an article written in 1925, he clarified his own stand in

the unceasing battle between art and photography:

... The battle between brush and camera becomes ridiculous if one realizes, through constant photographic practice, that all representation is interpretation—that the choice of object, segment, light, shadow, even the choice of soft or hard photographic paper, are highly creative "artistic" decisions.

The task of the modern photographer was a full understanding of this new medium—not as nature imitation, not as art imitation, but as modern man's most ingenious use of the fundamental power of light. The plasticity of the positive light impact, as in the gutter picture, led logically to an exploration of the plasticity of negative values. The "Two Nudes"

(Fig. 5) are sculptured against the rich texture of the background—not through the traditional recording of soft flesh, but through the grey gradations of the negative light volume.

As a painter, the problem of depth in pictorial space had been Moholy's main concern. As a photographer he tried for solutions that would create a non-illusionistic space effect. The renaissance tradition had looked at painting as a "window into nature," an illusion that negated the fact of pictorial abstraction. All art movements after 1900 had been unanimous in their attempts to liquidate this tradition and to confess to the picture plane as a unique, non-illusionistic medium. But photography still suffered from the old diorama aspect which originally had prompted its invention. In a series of photographs Moholy experimented with compositions that would be two-dimensional (Fig. 6) either by eliminating architectural perspective, or by selecting a structural pattern that pleased and excited through a purely photographic light-dark, solid-transparent interplay.

There were many protests, demand-

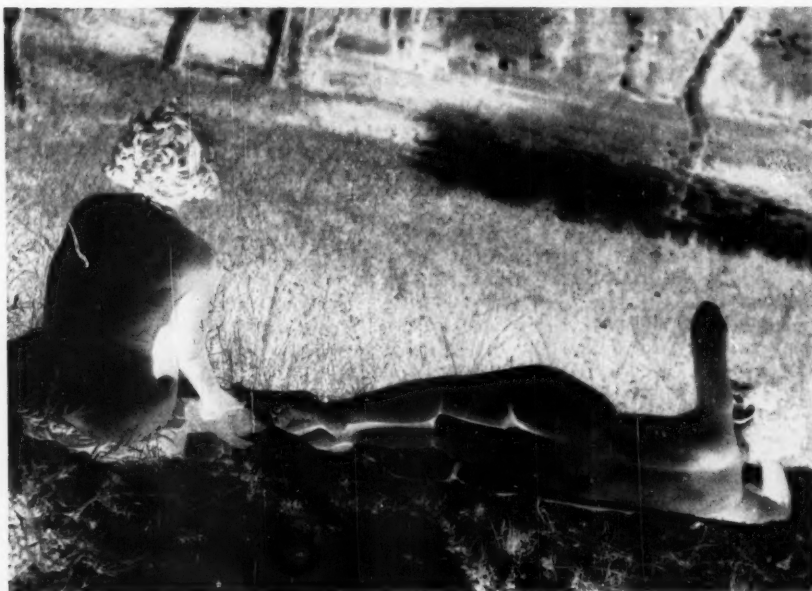
ing an explanation of why the recognizable view, the architecturally precise recording should be abandoned. To these questions Moholy answered through his teaching program in the photographic workshop of the Institute of Design in Chicago. "The illiterate of the future," he stated, "is no longer the man unable to read or write, but he who does not know how to handle a camera." The precise record, dependent on optical and photochemical knowledge, belongs to our daily existence as the knowledge of driving and typing. It is a confusion of terms to call a snapshot, developed and printed in the drug store, a "creative" effort.

Photography, true to its revolutionary potentialities, has to go beyond the record. It has to be integrated with design through study of textures, light patterns, positive and negative values; with physics through representation of space-time in stroboscopic experiments and the light-motion tracks of film; with chemistry through the use of new color compounds; above all, as the common denominator uniting all trends and experiments in the photo-

graphic field, with the sociological and emotional needs of our time.

The photographer [Moholy-Nagy wrote in his book *Malerei: Photographie: Film*] is not only the eyes but also the conscience of his time. The enormous range of media at his command, from the flash-shot of a crime-report, via x-ray pictures, to the finest modulations of natural form, or the light play of a photogram, he determines the visual world of today. He can produce cheap sentimentalism, brutal distortion of fact, or moving and significant compositions. It is his obligation to study the pictorial tradition of the past to know where the uniqueness of his task lies, to be at home in science and technology to utilize his tools to the highest advantage, and to be a sensitive knowing and thinking human being who is capable of directing rather than feeding the general need for visual information. *The genuine photographer has to become the universal man of our time.*

#### LASZLO MOHOLY-NAGY



5.



6.

LASZLO MOHOLY-NAGY

LASZLO MOHOLY-NAGY



7.

*for salable reality  
bucksters buy the camera*



VICTOR KEPPLER

Reproduced through the courtesy of Sutherland and Abbott (for Employer's Group).



VICTOR KEPPLER

Reproduced through the courtesy of Batten, Barton, Durstine and Osborn (for Phoenix Mutual).

*I*t is enlightening to look back at the largest circulated magazines of 50 years ago and see how photography has taken over the leading role in advertising. Few publications today would be recognizable to their most devoted readers if they were to omit reproductions of camera-work.

In New York and a half-dozen other cities, a comparatively small group of photographers specialize in advertising and editorial illustration. To the public which is aware of their work, it seems a fabulous world of glamour models, unbelievable incomes—a never-never land like a movie become real. The truth is, of course, that it is a working world with long hours and exacting standards to be maintained. There are good incomes for some, but they are earned the hard way.

Their world is scarcely more than a generation

old. The conditions after the first world war were right for its development, and the advertising agencies discovered that the camera was able not only to present a record which would make merchandise believable to the customer, but that it could compete directly with the artist and sell the mood to accompany an item and thus stimulate purchase. These same characteristics are useful to magazine editorial work, and although story illustration has scarcely been invaded by the camera, non-fiction is more and more a matter of pictures-plus-story.

One of the better known of the workers in this field is the New York illustrator, Victor Keppler. There may be many homes without a work of fine art, but there are probably few houses anywhere in the country today that do not have at least one Keppler reproduction somewhere within their walls.



*separation of fine, applied  
arts vanishes in photography*

Marcel Jouhandeau

RICHARD AVEDON



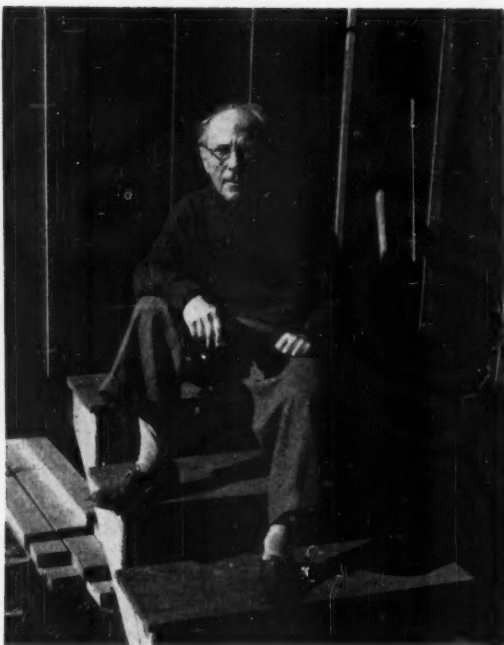
Dr. Edith Sitwell

GEORGE PLATT LYNES

*a* number of those who are genuinely artists in our medium have turned part or all of their time to commercial use. In fact, photography has demonstrated the essential falsity for our time of the old *beaux-arts* tradition of an inexorable split between the fine and the commercial arts.

There are some dozens who might be named in this group, many whose work may be seen in the better publications, who are pushing back the limits of what may be expressed with the camera. Most of them are young men, usually with a solid background in the arts.

To pick two of them for this page is to neglect others whose work is representative of trends today. But these two portraits will provide a glimpse at this phase of 1951's photography. George Platt Lynes is noted for his work in high fashion, in ballet and in distinguished portraiture. Richard Avedon is a flashing young genius whose work continually displays a new facet of his ability and who has the implied flattery of the most frequent imitation.



Edward Weston

ANSEL ADAMS

### *the "purists" return to an earlier tradition*

**O**nce upon a time--and it seems almost as long ago as that--a manifestation of the revolt against "academism" in photography produced a group which devoted itself to exploring purism in camera-expression. They proudly termed themselves the f/64 group and turned the exact record into a virtue instead of fighting to conceal it as did many of their contemporaries.

In spirit, they returned to the first generation of photographers, to the mercilessly exact daguerreotype. To them, the "limitations" of the camera were its strength, and their work demonstrated the correctness of this evaluation. The group has long since broken up as such, but there are a number of workers in this tradition still, particularly on the west coast.

They are one of the several general groupings in photography today. Frequently, they are erroneously set up in antithesis to the group centering in New York to whom the word "documentary" is loosely applied. The differences are more superficial than real.

The geographic separation between the best-

known of the workers in the two groups is accidental, yet it has helped cause the surface differences in subject-matter which confuse the issue. The western workers largely concentrate on the remarkable natural world which surrounds them, while the easterners focus on the metropolitan world and its chief characteristic--the swarming people.

If the product of the "classicists" sometimes seems a little remote, more than occasionally the pictures of the socially-conscious workers in the east seem empty, despite the "message" they purportedly convey.

Actually, the best of the workers in either group are at one in opposition to the routine, the purely commercial and the meretricious. In each case, there is, in Beaumont Newhall's phrase, a respect for the medium. The limitations are recognized, and the camera is handled for itself and not as a substitute brush.

The production of these men should be an influence on the methods of every photographer: they should not serve as models for imitation. Such an influence is not a matter of either choice of subject matter nor even actual techniques. It lies in their honesty, their straight-forwardness, their vision as expressed in camera-composition.

These factors are easier, sometimes, to see in the work of the classicists than they are in the work of other groups. But they are not the exclusive property of any school. They have existed in the whole body of work we continue to consider great photography and can be found in the work of many other contemporaries.

Of the classicists, Edward Weston and Ansel Adams in the west and Paul Strand in the east come most often to attention. They have superficial characteristics in common, yet their work is easy to distinguish as Dody points out in the following pages. These men continue to influence current work more strongly perhaps than any others we could name.

# weston strand adams



PAUL STRAND

*h*istory rarely arranges itself neatly for posterity's inspection, yet the round 50 years from 1900 to the present is a span with a definite dateline tag: in 1902 the Photo-Secession was founded, heralding the rebellion from which grew nearly all the fruitful phases of photography in this half-century. In that same year Paul Strand and Edward Weston made their first, box-camera photographs, half a continent apart and both still teenagers. And 1902 was the year of Ansel Adams' birth. What reader doesn't know the subsequent impact of these

men, revolutionizing concepts and vision, then and still?

If it seems presumptuous to join such names in a necessarily limited discussion, remember that 50 years is more than time enough for a thousand misconceptions to take root in the public mind and be perpetuated into myth, especially in a case where reproduction fails at carrying essentials. Already myths have crystallized about the work of Adams, Strand and Weston, in spite of—perhaps because of—their renown, and one would wish to clear away error at the opening of the

new age. Perhaps it is possible, without attempting such a task as a complete comparative survey, to highlight several of the distinctive characteristics of each man, since the most common fiction concerning them seems to be that their work is "alike," an idea that unfortunately contains just enough truth to pass for gospel.

One sees where the trouble lies. Clearly, there is a bond in their esteem for a certain degree of what might be termed technical realism—that intricate chiaroscuro of light and dark, together with the lens' startling

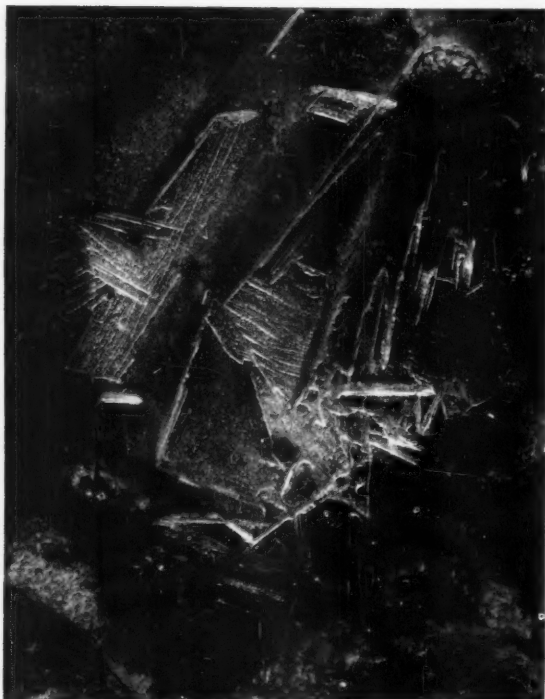
*dody* has recently written the introduction and edited the Daybook section of Edward Weston's *My Camera on Point Lobos*. A native of New Orleans, she is now on the west coast, employed by Ansel Adams but doing free-lance photography in addition, using both view camera and a Rolleiflex. Much of her photographic training was received during a two-year apprenticeship with Edward Weston.





ANSEL ADAMS

EDWARD WESTON

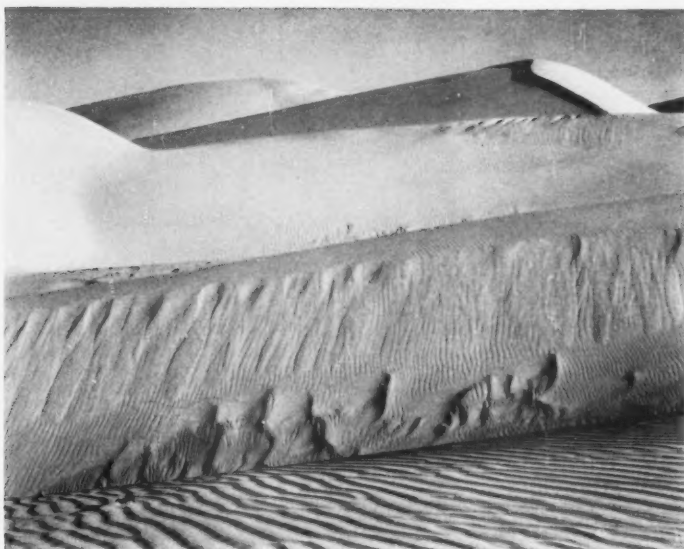


capacity for clarity, which in general yields a semblance of the normal appearance of the world. Each man at one point recognized how inimitably photographic this combination was, since it absolutely could not be produced, or duplicated fully, by any other means at all. Between 1915 and 1920 Strand and then Weston began responding to the excitement of this fact, and Adams, the younger man, experienced the same awakening after seeing Strand's photographs for the first time in 1930.

The idea was not basically new, of course; it was merely a reaffirmation of a photographic concept that had been temporarily neglected. What subsequently occurred was a gradual abandonment of their earlier ways of vision in order to explore this one phase of the medium's potentialities. This they have done superlatively well; only one must not forget the additional factor of major import—that each possesses an ineffable insight to which audiences instinctively respond.

Men such as Moholy-Nagy and Man Ray represent discovery in another direction. As their images may be called a departure *from* reality toward some inner meaning, so Weston, Strand and Adams stand for a departure *into* reality toward the same goal.





EDWARD WESTON

By using a more or less realistic technique, they seem to get under the skin of reality, securing a depth of vision by plunging into the surface of things, as one would dive into a pool.

For it is only the critic unfamiliar with their work who naively persists in labeling them realists in the sense of mere recorders of the factual. As Strand remarked in an article for *Photo Notes*, "A work of art . . . can be different from but not less than the objective reality." It is the quality of vision that concerns them. Technique is simply an expression of their individual insights into the world, and it is tempered by the nature of their vision. Any but the most hasty inspection discloses their images as neither mere records nor essentially alike.

Consider the matter of light. Each employs natural light exclusively for his creative work—including portraits—though doubtless not for the same reasons; yet the very look and meaning of the light differs from one man's work to the other. In Weston's prints the subject of the photograph sets the mood. The light's function is to limn that subject in the most meaningful way. It is often a quiet light, though luminous, and usually self-effacing. One's attention is directed unswerv-

ANSEL ADAMS





PAUL STRAND

(From the collection of Beaumont and Nancy Newhall)

ingly to the central object itself; it is from this alone that any drama must proceed.

Quite to the contrary, one frequently feels it is the very light itself that is being photographed by Adams. The play of light sets the mood; its glow in the air, its glint on surfaces, *its* drama imparting meaning to the objects on which it rests. In many prints the light has an authenticity, as of sunlight actually experienced. Weston's prints may present this sense of actuality through the handling of light, though to a lesser degree, but Strand's light most typically has yet another quality, difficult to describe. It is as if his subjects possess some private source of incandescence. Luminous, glowing, with opalescent whites, they appear to have been photographed by means of their own inner radiance.

Take another category as a basis for comparison. Each has inquired into certain areas of subject matter now recognized as distinctively his own, such as Weston's close-ups of shells and vegetables. In landscape, however, the three have a subject matter in common, and one moreover in which they each excel.

A landscape of Paul Strand's speaks usually of the people molded by it. A

lake is apt to have boats on it, or a hill, houses. Or people will be making the gestures of living in the scene. Always a sense of people, their first importance, infuses these images, key-noting an orientation that threads through all his work since those early moving portraits taken in the New York streets—the first true candid.

His skies have in them a feeling of weather about to happen. They are the moment of great portent—just before the sun breaks through or the snow comes—and are rendered with an extreme refinement of subtly modulated tones, pulsing and fading with light. In fact, all prints of his are rich, indeed opulent in their lustrous *chiaroscuro* of tone. Each one a carefully considered tapestry of form and feeling, slowly created, well-nigh unrepeatable and therefore rare, Strand's pictures are indeed precious, and one doesn't view them without this sense of man-made richness.

What then of Adams, specialist in the grand landscape of the West? Mountain-climber and conservationist, he is drawn by the primeval, the untouched. There are no boats on his high mountain lake, and winter snow will have no house nor footsteps in it. His is a poetic vision of the imponder-

able forces moving upon the face of Nature, springing, perhaps, from the religious quality in his personal feeling for the land.

Unlike Strand, his moments of emphasis are more often climactic, the peaks of extreme drama or spectacular loveliness: the thunderhead, the moon-rise dusk, the sunlit autumn leaves—moments of the exquisite ephemeral. His landscapes, with a feeling for form quite at variance with Strand's or Weston's, open into a space that invites entrance. One breathes, there is air in them. They are in the present, imparting the emotions of this specific moment in time, invoking the very feel of the air, the sparkle of the light. If the "mood is one of enveloping light" he will usually be concerned to keep this appearance in the finished print. Often there is a three-dimensional quality in the images compounded of his total procedure. Obviously, this is a description of realism—but it is a realism so heightened and sweetened by the lyric quality of his vision as to lose the name. As one baffled visitor to Yosemite Valley put it, after several treks to famous views much photographed by Adams, "Nothing looks as good as Ansel Adams' pictures of it!"

Strand's photographs lose most, perhaps, in reproduction; but Weston's work is hardest to describe with justice to its indefinable appeal, or even with accuracy, in view of his wide and prolific coverage during a long career. What is the telling phrase of summary? It is that the images have a piercing directness, as though one simply held a gift out in his hand. It is somehow a matter of going straight to the point. Richness and realism do not disappear from his work, but they are muted in relation to what Weston calls the Thing Itself. The viewer's foremost awareness is of this Thing photographed — its basic meaning, both yesterday and tomorrow, stripped to essentials, undramatized, or rather, with the drama seeming to stem, intrinsic, from the object's core of form.

The landscapes, like all of Weston's work, display a strong emphasis on form as such. Many come close to abstraction and can be appreciated on one level as pure design because their dynamics are less a realistic recession into space than a play among design elements of the relatively flat picture plane. (The close relationship to modern art is here apparent.) Still, the

images never lose touch entirely with reality; one can always "tell what it is."

At times Weston deliberately employs large and unrelieved areas of black as elements of design, unlike Adams, who almost invariably prefers modulation in his darker tones except in very minute areas. Adams likes to "see into his shadows," but on occasion he uses white as Weston uses black.

Strand never photographs a sky without some such richness in it as was earlier described. (A friend said recently, "Paul will not photograph on a bald-headed day!") On the other hand, Adams' skies, usually dramatically clouded, become, when cloudless, an equally dramatic tone so deep as to be almost black. And Weston may photograph a cloudless sky whose printed tones are never darker than a middle gray, or may even print a sky as merely white.

A whole host of such distinguishing characteristics exist, and one can also mention, although it is hardly necessary to emphasize, the striking physical variations between their prints that arise from their dissimilarities in vision. Adams, for example, enlarges,

the only one of the three who does so; yet Weston will show an unsharp print when he considers the vision of sufficient importance to warrant it; and Strand prefers a print surface with a slight mat, enough to remove the biting image sharpness, which he finds distasteful. (Thus is the f/64 myth also exploded.) The dissimilarities are really legion, although difficult to illustrate in reproduction: such things as print size or the over-all color of prints are enough in themselves to label instantly a print as being one man's doing or the other's.

Fortunately, there is no necessity to rank these men one, two, three, for the very reason of their broad differences. Each greatness is unique, and thus incomparable; it must be relished for its own merits. There is no more need to decide whose work is "best" than there is need to choose between pearls and diamonds in point of beauty. They are simply different, each with its own excitements. If these men are basically akin at all, it is perhaps chiefly as creative persons with a driving integrity of feeling for the medium, since to them photography is not a hobby nor a livelihood alone, but a beloved life's work.

EDWARD WESTON



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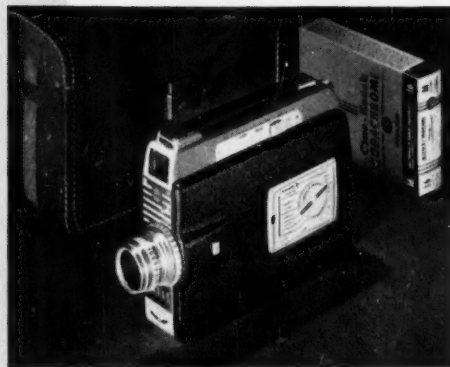
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**Lens:** Kodak Cine Ektar, 25mm.  $f/1.9$  (Lumenized); focus scale—12 inches to infinity. **Speeds:** 16, 24, and 64 (slow-motion) frames per second. **Controls:** Three-way exposure release—run, continuous-run, or single frame; Cine-Kodak Universal Guide for proper exposure calculation; footage indicator; motor lock to prevent accidental exposure; speed-control setting. **View Finder:** Eye-level, enclosed; adjustable for standard, wide-angle, and telephoto lenses; parallax-correction indicators. **Loading:** Instant slip-in loading with 50-foot magazines of 16mm. Kodachrome or black-and-white film. **Motor:** Spring-driven, governor-controlled; single winding pulls 10 feet of film. **Construction:** Die-cast aluminum, with black morocco-grain Kodadur covering; fittings of brushed aluminum. **Size and Weight:**  $6\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{1}{4} \times 2$  inches;  $2\frac{1}{4}$  pounds. **Accessories:** Choice of eleven accessory Kodak Cine Ektar and Kodak Cine Ektanon Lenses—from 15mm.  $f/2.5$  (wide angle) to 152mm.  $f/4.0$  (telephoto); Cine-Kodak Titler; Kodak Combination Lens Attachments; Cine-Kodak Compartment Case. **List Price:** \$192.50, including Federal Tax. Price subject to change without notice.



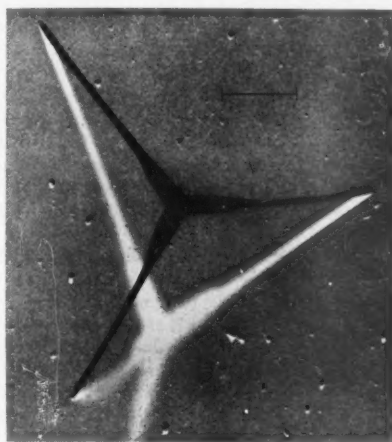
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# *beauty of scientific photos conceals profounder meanings*

*When we encounter photographs made by the scientists for their own esoteric purposes, we are frequently as delighted by their beauty as we are impressed by the universe they demonstrate. That, of course, is their least important function. Primarily, they assist in that patient accumulation of facts upon which the theories of pure science are predicated. A generation from now, the applied sciences will utilize these facts and theories in "practical" ways, and in two generations they will be the common property of the mechanic and of the repair man for the grandchild of the present electronic robots.*

Courtesy Argonne National Laboratories  
J. G. SAYRE



*Nuclear Particle Paths*

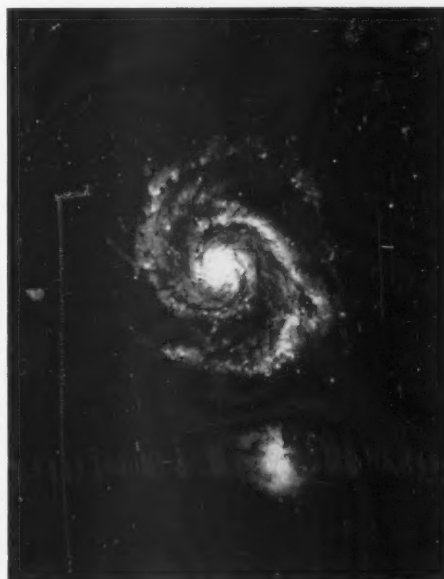
*Zinc Oxide Smoke (x49,000)*



Courtesy Eastman Kodak Company

Courtesy U. S. Navy Department

From P.S.A. Convention Exhibition



*Whirlpool Nebula*

*100 Miles Up*





Carolyn Ansbacher      ANSEL ADAMS  
(from *Making a Photograph*)

*our common task - one world  
in art as well as statecraft*

**P**hotography is still as "nationalistic" as are most of the graphic arts. Almost any print can be assigned a geographic origin, no matter what the subject matter—with the exception of certain types of pictorial matter. This regional approach is not to be deplored. Art is most vital when it has native roots. Every culture has its characteristic forms which are the natural language of those born within it.

The criterion of Soviet art is said to be Stalin's dictum that it must be "national in form, socialist in content." If we were to say that photography could well be "national in form, humanist in content," we might be closer to a workable idea for our western culture.

It may not be amiss at this point to insert the parenthesis that from this side of the not-so-iron curtain, what is visible of Soviet art, including photography, shows very little vitality. The examples of work in recent issues of magazines from the satellite countries show that work there, too, relapses into formula as soon as the state has been effectively "socialized." Soviet art is actually Victorian in the worst sense of that term. It is stale

and academic. Marxist art is like Marxist economics, stalled in the middle of the 19th century.

It is ironic, yet tragic, that in our western world modern art (and photography) is labeled by such "critics" as Congressman Dondero as "communist," since that is the very form that is not tolerated under any totalitarian government. Only under what was the weakest of the dictatorships, that of Mussolini, was any form of art which was not traditional, pretty-pretty and popular, tolerated. Art is a touchstone for many things. It is almost safe to generalize that where new forms are most vociferously opposed, you will find a tendency toward fascism—black or Red.

There must be freedom for any art-form to develop; there must also be some social responsibility on the part of the artist. This is the dilemma of the free world today in every sphere of activity. We are in a period of social change, no matter how nostalgic we may be for the apparent stability of 1901. In the arts, as elsewhere, we must learn how to oppose effectively the encroachments of totalitarianism without ourselves becoming totalitarian.

The photographer today has two responsibilities: his responsibility to the integrity of his medium and his responsibility toward making democracy more effective. His work will inevitably be judged by his contemporaries and by history on these standards.

They are not easy standards to satisfy, but no lasting art was ever born out of ease of accomplishment. It is not a particularly easy world we live in today—and that is one of the reasons it is so interesting to be alive. The ivory towers have all been felled and we must live in the present, and participate in it.

One of the major characteristics of today's world is the comparative ease of intercommunication. Radio, periodicals, movies are helping to tie the world together, and soon television will become another international language. Recent wars have shifted whole peoples, as well as brought a new type of immigrant to our midst, one who has taught as well as learned.

To the American observer, the influence of Eu-

ropean work and workers who have come here is more evident than is our influence overseas. Some aspects in particular stand out, such as the strongly seminal influence of those Continentals who brought the miniature-camera techniques here during the 30's and the group of those driven here by the spread of totalitarianism during the 40's.

Such cross-fertilization is all to the good. While any art must keep its native roots if it is to have vitality, the world tomorrow must be one world. To make it such, the artist has as strong a responsibility as has the statesman.

# american impact abroad

*do you feel what I feel? We've seen this together before. The same titles, the same photographs, maybe the same photographers. Wasn't it in Venice 15 years ago? Or 12 years ago in Zürich? No, eight years ago in London. That's it."*

My friend and I were leaving the Philadelphia Hotel of New York. I had persuaded him to walk around a photographic exhibition with me, just as I did once before on the other side of the Atlantic at one of our much too rare meetings.

He is an authority on the psychology of art and particularly interested in the mass-media of our times, like radio, television, films. I always hoped he would settle down one day and do some methodical research into photographic matters. Just now he sounded sufficiently provoked, though not too flattering.

"The sameness of these pictures was quite puzzling. Like endless cups of very weak, oversweetened tea. Genuine *l'art pour l'art* only without any *l'art* to it. These prints had the dull uniformity of outworn and meaningless conventions. Quite international conventions at that. Without looking into the catalog you could only guess at their geographical source by their subject matter and if some American ex-

hibitor happened to show a French subject or a Swedish photographer had taken a Mexican scene, your guess would almost certainly go wrong . . ."

I agreed with him and still believe that when looking for national cross-currents in photography one could only be misled by searching for individual influences, for example, among the pictorialists. Visiting perennial salons, turning over the pages of established yearbooks and reading each other's articles, they simultaneously learned from each other, took up each other's subjects and dabbled in each other's techniques. So all individual character soon receded and names lost their importance, as what had been a virile urge at the beginning of the century became a world-wide fashion by the time the first European war ended.

America had as many outstanding pictorialists as most European countries, but there was nothing primarily American about the trend of pictorialism. Its basic techniques—the dry plate and the controlled printing processes—were of European origin and so was the movement of amateurs who, fired by ideas they borrowed from Impressionist painters, mocked at the stilted poses and stagey props of professional studios, took their cameras

into the countryside and the haze-laden streets of big cities, trained them on shafts of light breaking through the windows of cathedrals or railway stations and captioned their products with poetic allusions. Then, within a couple of decades, that generation exhausted its vocabulary, overworked its ideas and hung hundreds of practically identical prints on salon walls from Belgrade to Timbuktu.

The inevitable reaction soon set in. Between the Great Wars, it developed some clearly recognizable strains, although of course, these crossed each other and became entangled.

One of them was highly European and decidedly intellectual. Small articulate groups began to preach something like the "primacy of the tool." Perhaps because they were not very sure of their own abilities in properly handling their tools, they set out to defend whatever their tools happened to produce. The camera and the sensitized materials had an inborn right to visualize the world in their own way. Lack of definition, tumbling verticals, double exposures or even pressure marks on a plate became meaningful shapes from which the theories of photograms, photomontage and the unshackled camera were courageously and stimulatingly developed. Some of the leading continental advocates of these innovations settled later in the United States without, however, leaving more than an indirect influence in their trail.

This influence became fruitful only

*a. kraszna-krausz* created the present pattern of German photographic literature when he joined the firm of Messrs. Wilhelm Knapp in Halle, the oldest photographic publishing company, which then issued 12 magazines and many hundred titles. In 1937, he went to England, where he was instrumental in creating the Focal Press, which now has the largest list of photographic titles in the world. The titles edited and published by him run into the hundreds.





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where it crossed a diametrically differing school of thought. Commerce and industry—in particular, American commerce and industry—increasingly awakened to the selling prowess of photographs. Promptly and shrewdly, businessmen demanded clear-cut outlines, true-to-touch textures and well-isolated shapes for showing off their wares, and these demands were met by the photographic work of a younger generation, inspired by the documentary honesty of a few outstanding converts from fuzzy pictorialism. People like that once left their somewhat isolated mark both in the United States and in Europe some little time before the advent of commercial photography, but commercial photography secured for their approach, technique and style a new purpose, powerful sponsors and a world-wide public. Expanding American business soon imposed on its competitors abroad its own pace and methods in pictorial representation and commercial studios began to flourish all over the continent, whilst European operators pored over American catalogs and advertising layouts.

This is by no means the only example within our field of view of how economic power spreads "cultural" influence. As the years between the two wars went by, Hollywood movies projected more and more American images at tens of thousands of screens all over the world. The light-and-shade symbolism of their stark drama, their pictorial clichés for the millions, their borderline typology of glamour kicked in the doors of the portrait studios around London's Piccadilly or Berlin's Kurfuerstendamm just as they did within a mile of New York's Times Square. It was hardly surprising that an aspiring young actress in Rome or even Prague should want her stage handouts to look like Hollywood movie stills and that her teen-age fans should promptly expect a similar effort from her boyfriend with a camera.

But we were still somewhere in the 30's and not all was one-way traffic as yet. German precision cameras were invading the States and soon enough a long stream of European refugees would demonstrate over there how to make the most of them. The best of these expatriate cameramen clustered around new American magazines which, supported by a giant public, opened novel vistas in illustrated journalism. The exiled European photogra-

pher brought with him, besides the extremely flexible miniature technique, a wide-eyed admiration for the endless wonders of his adopted homeland. His new employers in turn met him more than halfway by offering him unheard-of opportunities for exposing literally masses of negatives, and his new public was neither settled nor prejudiced enough in its tastes to refuse to look at almost anything it had not seen before.

Then the second Great War broke out.

Europe (with the exception of German uniformed camera squads) retired for a while from the less utilitarian amenities of photography. America was left with chances of its own to play with new toys like color, flash and the speedlamp. By the time the United States was swept into what was now a world-wide conflagration, her troops, her ships and her planes were accompanied by an even younger generation of largely native-born photographers, still gripping mostly German cameras, now reinforced with American-made accessories, but displaying a truly American pioneering spirit of mobility, boldness and realism. They sent home the most dramatic, the most magnificent and the most heartbreaking pictures of human courage, tragedy and degradation the world has ever seen. And the whole world got them to see. American service magazines and overseas propaganda editions found their way to the remotest corners of the globe. Editors and publishers in foreign countries hurriedly remodeled their own products to give them an American look, as their European photographers scrambled for flashguns, speedlamps and color films. The trend of dynamic American candid realism holds today the whole world as its stage.

Thus the interplay between American and European photography since 1900 evolves as the story of three generations separated by two wars. In the course of these 50 years, just as in the economic and political fields, the importance of American contributions steadily grew also within the narrow confines of photography. Today it seems so overwhelming that some people are beginning to complain of it as too uncomfortable in its exclusiveness. But, of course, that is a one-sided view, merely as it appears from the tradition-conscious Eastern fringes of the Atlantic.



*camera's social role  
will dominate future*

**t**his presentation of the face of photography today is necessarily incomplete, if only for reasons of space. There are dozens of workers today whose prints are rarely seen in the photographic magazines who are contributing much that is worth while to photography.

Journalism, pictorialism, commercial, scientific, whatever the field, it is a rapidly-growing and changing one today. AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHY plans to continue presenting a cross-section of work from this country and interesting work from abroad. We can all learn from each other's production.

There will be many technical changes in the half-century to come, particularly as the techniques of color are improved and simplified. The most significant change will more likely be in the increasing role photography plays in society, both backstage in production and research and out in front as a means of communication. More and more that camera is apt to be a movie camera and the screen a television tube.

But AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHY will venture the prediction that the black-and-white print will never be completely outmoded, even though it may be outnumbered by the countless color images—in motion and probably in depth—which will impinge on tomorrow's world.

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## FIFTY YEARS AGO

Before we meet again we shall have entered on another year and on another century; may our readers see many of the former, although none may hope to see the latter. . . .

The close of the century suggests a . . . line of thought, impersonal rather than personal. None can have a part in more than one, but those of us who have lived through the greater, or a considerable part, of the nineteenth, may justly feel that they, during their "three score and ten," have seen greater progress in all that goes to make civilization, in all that makes peoples or nations great, than was made in any previous century, or perhaps all the centuries together.

Not the least important of our aims in the conducting of the magazine is the helping of our readers to make pictures instead of mere photographs, and in that, through "Our Portfolio," we have been fairly successful, many of those, as may be seen from our illustrations, who but a short time ago were little better than button pressers being now able to do really good pictorial work.—The "American Amateur Photographer," December, 1900.

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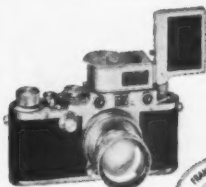
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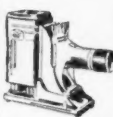
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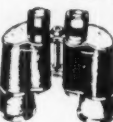
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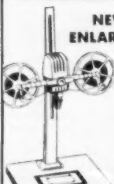
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# Salons

**55th Annual Exhibition**, Birmingham Photographic Society. Closing date for entry forms Jan. 13, for entries Jan. 20. Two classes: 1) pictorial and 2) scientific, technical and record. Pictorial class: pictorial prints, limit four, one shilling per print; monochrome lantern slides, limit eight, one shilling for four; color transparencies, limit eight, one shilling for four. Scientific class: monochrome or color prints, one shilling per mount; monochrome or color transparencies, limit eight, one shilling for four. Information from: Ass't. Hon. Exhibition Secretary, Mr. D. McM. Henderson, 62 All Saints Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham 14, England.

**19th Minneapolis International Salon** of Photography and 3rd Color Slide Exhibition. Pictorial closes Jan. 15, color slides Jan. 22. Four prints, monochrome or color (any process) and/or four color transparencies. \$1 each section. PSA rules. Information from Warren Anderson, 123 So. 7th St., Minneapolis, Minn.

**14th International Salon of Photographic Art of Portugal**. Closes Jan. 31, 1951. Address: Vice-Presidente do Gremio Portugues de Fotografia, Rua Braancamp, 42, 2, Lisbon, Portugal.

**15th Philadelphia International Exhibition of Photography**, Miniature Camera Club of Philadelphia. Closes Feb. 10. Limit four prints, any medium, and/or four 2x2 color slides. \$1 each section. P.S.A. rules. Information from: John A. Adams, 546 Putnam Road, Merion Station, Penna.

**38th Pittsburgh International Salon of Photographic Art**, Academy of Science and Art Photographic Section. Prints and color slides. Closing date for prints, Feb. 21; for slides, Feb. 28. Limit and entry fees not stated. P.S.A. rules. Information from: Karl S. Leach, 92 Estella Ave., Pittsburgh 11, Penna.

**7th San Francisco International Color Slide Exhibit**, Photochrome Club of San

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Francisco. Closes Feb. 24. Limit four 2x2 slides, \$1. P.S.A. rules. Information from: Burton H. Landensohn, 3140 Clay St., San Francisco 15, Calif.

**3rd New York International Color Slide Exhibit**, New York Color Slide Club, Inc. Closes April 18. Limit four slides, \$1. Information from: Dr. R. B. Pomeroy, 745 Fifth Ave., New York 22, N.Y.

**15th Rochester International Salon of Photography**. Closes Feb. 9. Pictorial, documentary, color and nature sections and large size transparencies, \$1 each section. Information from: Ezra C. Poling, Exhibit Director, Memorial Art Gallery, Rochester 7, N. Y.

**9th Salon International Albert I**, Charleroi, Belgium. Closes Feb. 10. Four prints, \$1 (international money order.) Information from: M. R. Populaire, 18 rue J. Destree, Charleroi, Belgium.

**10th Montreal International Salon of Pictorial Photography**. Closes Feb. 13. Four prints, \$1. P.S.A. rules. Information from: Walter F. Wood, 500 Dominion Square Bldg., Montreal, Canada.

**1st Montreal International Color Slide Salon**. Closes Feb. 21. Four 2x2 slides, \$1.00. P.S.A. rules. Information from: Walter F. Wood, 500 Dominion Square Bldg., Montreal, Canada.

**International Exhibition of Photography of the Ipswich and District Photographic Society**. Closes Feb. 24. Three sections: Class A (pictorial, including portraiture) 4 prints; Class B (natural history) 4 prints; Class C (color) 6 prints and/or 6 transparencies. \$1 or 5/- each section. Informa-

tion from: Hon. Exhibition Secretary, Ipswich and District Photographic Society, c/o the Curator, The Museum, High Street, Ipswich, England.

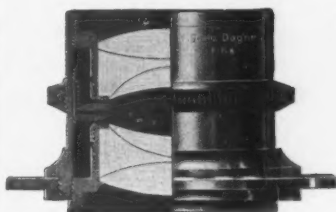
**6th Port Colborne International Exhibition of Photography**. Four prints, \$1. Closes March 3. P.S.A. rules. Information from: Dr. G. B. White, 239 Sugarleaf St., Port Colborne, Ontario, Canada.

**3rd Reading International Exhibition of Photography**. Closes Mar. 12. Four prints and four color slides, \$1 each section. P.S.A. rules. Information from: August J. Heid-

rich, Central Y.M.C.A., Reading, Penna.

**1951 Seattle International Exhibition of Photography**. Closes Mar. 15. Four prints, \$1. P.S.A. rules. Information from: Ray B. Pollard, Salon Secretary, 4063 56th Ave. S.W., Seattle 6, Washington.

**14th South African Salon of Photography**, Johannesburg. Also exhibited at Port Elizabeth, Durban and Pietermaritzburg. Closes March 15. Four prints, \$1 or 5/-. Information from: Hon. Salon Secretary, P.O. Box 7024, Johannesburg, So. Africa.



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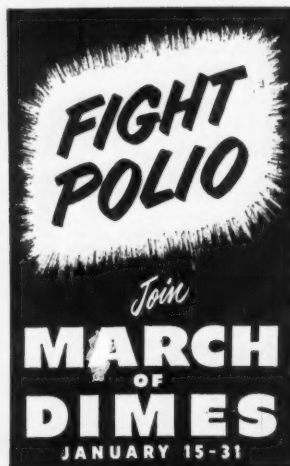
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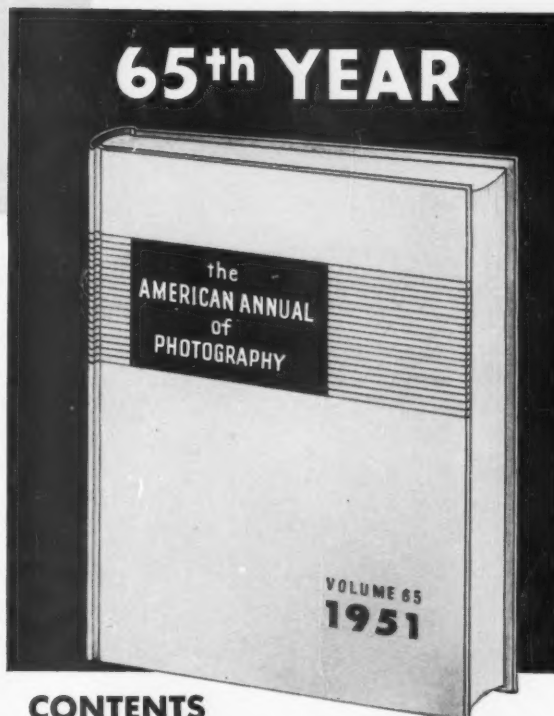
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